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ST. GEORGE
Flemish. *Circa* A.D. 1500

Add. MS. 38126, f. 139*b*, British Museum

A MEDIAEVAL SCRAP-HEAP

BY

W. EDWARDS, M.A.

HEADMASTER OF MIDDLESBROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

AUTHOR OF "NOTES ON EUROPEAN HISTORY"
AND "NOTES ON BRITISH HISTORY"

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TO

MY WIFE

72062

PREFACE

Recent years have seen a new development in historical study. While political and constitutional problems continue to receive due attention, the importance of social questions is more widely recognised. The change has involved the study of humble folk; the lives of citizens, priests, monks and others of similar standing supply the student with ample material, and add life and detail to the pageant of history.

The present book is an attempt to give some idea of the religious beliefs of the man in the street in the Middle Ages, and to show how his life was affected by two great ecclesiastical institutions—the Religious House and the Parish Church. Its scope is limited, but, in spite of this limitation, the subject is so wide that only a partial treatment is possible. But it is hoped that the scraps of which the book is composed may illustrate the point of view of the ordinary man of the time, and that the contrast between mediaeval and modern ideas may prove of interest to the reader.

The references show that considerable use has been made of contemporary records and that the material thus obtained has been supplemented by facts derived from well-known secondary authorities. The author desires especially to acknowledge his indebtedness to Dr. C. C. Coulton, whose works, and particularly his *Mediaeval Studies* and *Mediaeval Garner*, have not only supplied interesting material but also afforded useful suggestions as to method of treatment.

While the author has attempted to follow the approved methods of historical research, he has also tried to tell his story in a manner rather more popular than is usually adopted by writers of history. He hopes that, whatever faults may be found with the book, it will escape that of dullness.

The author has, as on a previous occasion, to express his sincere thanks for most valuable advice received from Professor A. Hamilton Thompson, who has read the typescript and offered very helpful criticism. He thanks his colleague, Mr. G. O. Fox, M.A., for suggesting a number of verbal improvements. He is indebted to the staff of the British Museum and to Mr. W. Lillie, the Librarian of the Public Library, Middlesbrough, and his colleagues for unfailing courtesy and effective assistance.

The illustrations have been collected largely from the sculpture, woodwork, glass and wall paintings of English Cathedrals and Parish Churches and from the illustrations of mediaeval manuscripts. In all cases the name of the photographer has been given, but grateful acknowledgment must be made of the help given by the Deans of the Cathedrals concerned; the Directors of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum, and the Keeper of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	Religious History	1
II.	God, Christ and the Virgin Mary	33
III.	Sin, Penance and the Last Judgment	55
IV.	Preaching, Excommunication and Interdict	69
V.	Paradise, Hell, Purgatory and Heaven	87
VI.	The Devil and His Servants	113
VII.	Of Saints	145
VIII.	Relics, Shrines and Pilgrimages	190
IX.	The Monastic System	222
X.	English Monastic Life	238
XI.	The Parish	272
XII.	Priests and Archdeacons	310
	Index	334

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
St. George	*Frontispiece*
The Angel Choir	xvi
The Creation	3
Creation of Eve from Adam's Rib	5
The Expulsion from Eden	5
Building the Ark; Daniel in the Lions' Den	9
The Ark	9
The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah	11
The Building of the Tower of Babel	13
Samson carrying away the Gates of Gaza	17
Jonah escaping from the Whale's Mouth	17
David prays to God for Forgiveness for his Sins	21
The Nativity	25
The Baptism of Our Lord	25
Christ's Entry into Jerusalem	27
The Resurrection	27
The Crucifixion	31
Christ in Judgment	42
The Virgin Mary saves a Youth who has been hanged	49
A Devil tries to drown a Sinful Monk	53
The Virgin Mary rescues the Monk	53
The Resurrection of the Dead	67
The Ladder of Salvation of the Human Soul	93
Hell's Cauldron	95
The Mouth of Hell	99
Tortures of the Condemned	101
Roasting a Soul	101

PAGE

Angel playing Organ 111
Angel playing Rebeck 111
Devil 115
Devils 117
The Punishment of a Dishonest Alewife . . 121
A Queen and an Angel tormenting Devils . 123
Devils try to interfere with the Course of Justice 126
St. Dunstan seizes the Devil by the Nose . 143
St. Christopher 147
St. Julian the Harbourer 153
Life of St. Augustine of Hippo . . . 155
Life of St. Augustine of Hippo . . . 157
Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine of Siena . 160
St. Nicholas praying immediately after his Birth 161
Scenes from the Life of St. Lawrence . . 171
St. Catherine and her Wheel . . . 173
The Murder of Becket 179
Reliquary from Winchester Cathedral . . 193
The Legend of the True Cross . . . 203
A Shrine 211
Part of St. Osmund's Shrine . . . 213
The Chancel, Rievaulx Abbey . . . 229
Cell at Mount Grace Priory . . . 232
Cloister Court, Jervaulx Abbey . . . 233
Rood Screen 280
Low Side Window 281
Easter Sepulchre 283
Wall Painting of Herod's Feast . . . 289
Carrying a Corpse to Burial. . . . 299
The Marmion Tomb 301
Danish Hogback 305
Priest's Tombstone 307
Monk assaulting Secular Priest . . . 312

B. C. Clayton

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS HISTORY

The Scriptures

Literary criticism was a product of the Renaissance ; in the early Middle Ages the written word was accepted without question. The temporal power of the Pope was supported by the *Donation of Constantine*, a document which was forged about 760, and professed to be a grant from the Emperor Constantine to Pope Silvester I. (314-336) of the sovereignty over Italy and the countries of the West. This "monstrous fable of the Donation" [1] remained unchallenged until 1440, when Lorenzo Valla proved its falsity.

In such circumstances the Bible, the holiest of writings, was accepted without hesitation as the inspired word of God. In a Greek MS. of the four gospels at Basel, St. John is represented as dictating to a secretary while, with one hand behind his ear, he is listening carefully to the direct word of God, whose hand appears coming out of a cloud. The Biblical narrative was regarded as literally true. An age which expected saints to work miracles found no

[1] Milman.

difficulty in accepting the miracles of the Old and New Testament. The problems which the Higher Criticism has raised, and tried to solve, did not trouble the uncritical men of the Middle Ages. They believed that the world was created in six days, that the Tower of Babel was really built and that the whale swallowed Jonah. They did not question the statements of the Bible, but their efforts to interpret those statements often seem distinctly humorous to modern readers, and the Biblical narrative was frequently supplemented by legend.

The Old Testament

The Creation.

Mediaeval commentators found the story of the Creation particularly attractive. From questions put by a Master of Arts of Oxford to his pupil we learn that God was in the farther end of the wind when he created the earth. Adam was made of earth, fire, wind, clouds, air (whence he derived the power of speech and thought), dew (which appears in the form of sweat), flowers (which gave him his eyes) and salt which salted his tears. At the time of creation he looked like a man of thirty years of age and was eighty-six inches high. Adam and Eve had thirty sons and thirty daughters.[1]

The story of the creation of Eve led to different deductions. Some held that as Eve was taken from Adam's side and not from his head she was obviously his inferior. Others maintained that the circumstances of her creation showed that

[1] Coulton, *Cambridge Anthologies : The Middle Ages*, ii. 115.

THE CREATION — Tams, Cambridge

The Earth is seen taking shape in the centre of the Universe

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

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CREATION OF EVE FROM ADAM'S RIB

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THE EXPULSION FROM EDEN

Lincoln Cathedral

she was destined to be Adam's companion, for, if she had sprung from his head she would have been his master, if from his feet his slave.[1] Robert of Blois [2] asserted that, as God created Eve in Paradise and Adam before Paradise, He showed clearly that He loved women more than men.

The story of the Creation, Temptation and Fall of Adam was accepted without question. "Whence comes man, where is he, whither does he go? He comes from Adam who has ruined us all for an apple." [3]

After Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise they were said to have wept for a hundred years on Adam's Peak in Ceylon.[4] Marco Polo [5] states that the Saracens worshipped as relics of Adam portions of the hair and teeth of Buddha which were preserved in Ceylon. After death Adam and Eve descended into hell, but were delivered from torment at the time of the death of Christ.[6]

The Flood.

Much ingenuity was expended over Noah's Ark. According to Higden [7] Noah spent a hundred years in building the Ark; he made it of plain boards dressed with pitch within and without. Higden repeats the dimensions given in the sixth chapter of Genesis, but fears that an Ark three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits high could not have contained

[1] *Mediaeval People*, 110.
[2] Langlois, *Vie en France au moyen âge*, i. 187.
[3] *Ibid.* 163. [4] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 227.
[5] Everyman's Library, 374.
[6] *Knight de la Tour Landry*, E.E.T.S., 59.
[7] *Polychronicon*, R.S., ii. 235.

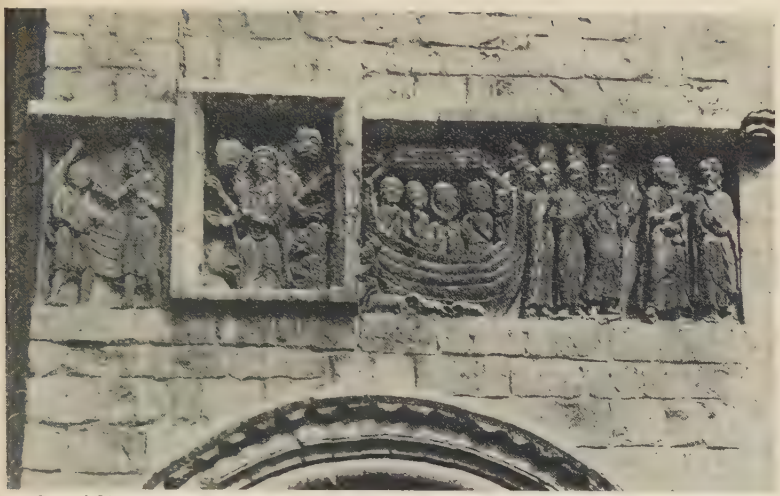
all the flesh, fowl, cattle and creeping things to which it afforded a refuge. He gets over the difficulty by asserting that the standard of measure was a geometrical cubit of nine feet, and thus, while accepting the statement of Scripture, greatly increases the capacity of the Ark.

Some learned commentators asserted that Noah's wife, whom they call Dalida, delayed her entry into the Ark until she had drunk another pot of ale with her friends. According to the *Limburg Chronicle*,[1] Noah piously said *Benedicite* as he entered; thereupon the Devil, who had hidden himself on board, promptly fled through a hole in the bottom. The Ark might have foundered if the dove had not plugged the hole with its tail.

Higden[2] says that the Flood lasted a year, not forty days, as the Bible states, and that the water rose fifteen cubits above the highest hill. After the waters subsided men ate flesh; previously they had lived on herbs and roots.

Otto of Freising[3] asserts that part of the Ark still remained in Armenia, and that men took bitumen from it which they used *ad expiationem*. He accepts Josephus' statement that the old patriarchs lived long because they were religious men created by God Himself, who prolonged their lives that they might study astrology and geometry, "which they could not have learned unless they lived six hundred years". He maintains that three important races sprang

[1] Coulton, *Cambridge Anthologies: The Middle Ages*, ii. 78.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., ii. 241. [3] Pertz, iii. 36-38.



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BUILDING THE ARK

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

THE ARK

Lincoln Cathedral

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THE ARK

W. A. Call,
Monmouth

Salisbury Cathedral

from the three sons of Japheth—the Medes from Madeus, the Ionians from Ianus and the Tyrians from Thyras.

An age which attached great importance to omens naturally respected Joseph, who, as Otto of Freising points out,[1] "was exceeding wise in prodigies, first established the understanding of dreams and seemed to know all divine and human law". Joseph.

The mighty deeds of Samson[2] made a strong Samson.

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THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH
Chapter House, Salisbury Cathedral

appeal to an age in which might was too often right.

Robert of Blois[3] adds much interest to the story of Jonah. Jonah, he says, led by an angel, entered Nineveh by the butchers' quarter, and held his nose owing to the stench. In the main street he came to the spice market and "thought he had passed from Hell to Paradise"; but the angel held his nose. Jonah.

[1] Pertz, iii. 46. [2] Page 17.
[3] Langlois, *Vie en France au moyen âge*, i. 190.

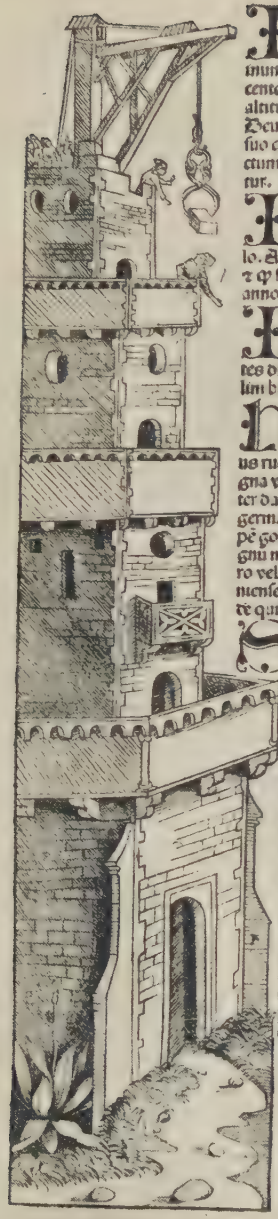
The Holy Land.

Travellers supported the evidence of the Old Testament by testifying to the continued existence of buildings and places mentioned in it. Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela tells of the Synagogue of Damascus which formerly was the residence of Benhadad, King of Syria, of which one wall "was framed of glass by enchantment".[1] At Babylon he saw the palace of Nebuchadnezzar and the burning fiery furnace.[2] He speaks of two labourers of Jerusalem,[3] who accidentally found a cavern in the city. They entered it in search of treasure and came "to a large hall, supported by pillars of marble encrusted with gold and silver, before which stood a table, with a golden sceptre and crown. This was the sepulchre of David, King of Israel, to the left of which they saw that of Solomon in a similar state, and the sepulchres of all the kings of Judah, who were buried there."

Sir John Mandeville, always interesting though not always reliable, saw on Mount Horeb "the rock to which Moses fled for dread when he saw Our Lord face to face. And in that rock is imprinted the form of his body; for he threw himself so strongly and so hard on that rock that all his body was buried into it through the miracle of God." Near Shechem he saw the tomb of Joseph, and at Dothan the cistern into which Joseph was thrown by his brethren.

A French Bishop Arculf, who visited the Holy Land about 700, found the walls of the house of Rahab still standing at Jericho.[4] Saewulf, an

[1] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 90. [2] *Ibid.* 100.
[3] *Ibid.* 85. [4] *Ibid.* 7.



Tres principes Jectan. s. Nembroth t Suphena cum suis populis formidantes diluuiū terū posse mundare cōuenerūt in campū sennaar: dicentes adinuicem. Edificemus turrim cuius altitudo pingat vsq; ad celos tē. Gen. xi. Deus autē videns q̄ non cessarent a stulto suo cōsilio confudit eor linguas: t ita factum est vt per totum mūdum dispergerentur.

Jecta ter ph. te sem

Primum regni Nembroth fuit babilon qui post confusionem linguarū ipsas adipt. regno relicto filio suo belo. Augustinus vo dicit cum inde fugatus: t q̄ filij Assur regnum illud obtinuerunt vsq; ad annos. 1305.

Cathal

Hic Belus dicitur regnasse in obscuro q̄ paruū comunū habuit. Et primꝰ fuit qui errorē populi terre patrauit. Un diuerse gētes diuersimode eum appellant. s. bell baal. baalim beelphegor belzebub.

Hic oriūtur plura regna. primo scianū q̄ licet sit vetustissimū tamen inter primaria regna non cōputatur. Unde ꝓter illius ruditatem regio illa barbarica ē appellata magna valde. quia meotidis paludibus inapies inter danubium t occeanum septētrionalem vsq; ad germaniamā porrigitur. Et est prima pars europē gothi yngari t dani sunt de bijs. Secūdum regnū massiageraꝝ. Terciū sichomoꝝ de quo varro velut antiquo tempe exorsus peruenit ad athenienses: deinde ad latinos. Quartum egiptiorū de quibus in sequenti folio.

Cōm Augu. Inter cetera regna duo sunt clariora assiriorū t romanorum temporū t locis ordinata t distincta. Illud primo in oriente aliud in occidente surrexit. atq; i fine illius initū huius fuit. Secūdus igit rex assiriorū et primus monarcha fuit Ninus qui libidine dominādi vicinas suis bella intulit. quos ꝓter bellandi imperitiam cito subegit. Totamq; asiam facile obtinuit. Et sic factus est primus orientalium monarcha. Hic ciuitatē magnā Ninuen. qui assur edificauerat ampliauit. Et ex nomine suo appellauit Ninuen. hic primꝰ fuit inuentor ydolatrie ex eo q̄ pā suo belo mortuo ymaginem in lenamentis colorib⁹ sua fecit. concedens omnibus reis qui ad eas cōfugerent securitatē. t sic adorari cepit. Cuius exemplo t alij huiusmodi ymagines fecerunt mortuis. quas demones intrantes dantes responsa. diuinos obtinuerunt honores. huius tandem ydolum Daniel pphēta cum in babiloniam captiuus adduc⁹ fuisset cum eius templo subuertit.

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Shrewsbury School

THE BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF BABEL
Nüremberg Chronicle

Englishman, who went to Palestine in 1103, asserts that the oak of Mamre " still flourishes and bears leaves " near Hebron ; with a caution unusual in mediaeval travellers, he wisely adds, " according to the statement of the inhabitants of the place ".[1]

The New Testament

After Alcuin left the court of Charlemagne for the Abbey of Tours his help was sought by his old friends who found difficulty in understanding parts of the New Testament. Gisela, the sister of Charlemagne, and her niece Rotrude wrote to ask him to explain certain parts of St. John's Gospel and he tried to resolve their doubts by sending them " two bulky volumes of exegesis ".[2] The problem of the canon presented difficulties, and Otto of Freising [3] declared that only the Gospels of St. John and St. Mark and the Epistles of SS. Peter, Paul, John and Jude could be accepted as canonical. But to many readers the legends, which supplemented the narrative of the Scriptures, prove of greater interest than problems of exegesis or the question of the canon.

The Birth of Christ.

Higden [4] states that at the birth of Christ a golden image, which Romulus had set up in Rome, fell from its place, and the Temple of Peace was shattered. When Christ entered Egypt the idols of the country fell to the ground. Herod received due punishment for his sins, for one of his own children, who had been put out to nurse, perished

[1] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 46.
[2] *Life of Charlemagne*, 167. [3] Pertz, iii. 144.
[4] *Polychronicon*.

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in the Slaughter of the Innocents[1] and, as a punishment for the murder of John the Baptist, the army of Herod was routed in a campaign against the King of Arabia, while the earth opened and swallowed up the daughter of Herodias.[2]

Pilate. The fate of Pilate led to contradictory legends. Higden[3] says that Tiberius, who was "labouring of great infirmity", heard that there was a man in Palestine who healed all diseases by a word of mouth and ordered Pilate to "sende that leche to him". The Crucifixion prevented Pilate from obeying the order, but Tiberius was healed on seeing the face of Christ impressed upon a cloth which St. Veronica sent him. Pilate was ordered to appear before Tiberius to be tried for condemning Christ to death. He appeared wearing the seamless coat of Our Lord, and while he continued to wear it Tiberius could pass no sentence on him. He was afterwards thrown into prison where he committed suicide. But Higden contradicts his own story. In another place[4] he says that the seamless coat was found many years later by Gregory, Bishop of Antioch, in a marble coffer, and therefore Pilate could not have worn it when he appeared before Tiberius. He also states[5] that Pilate was put in prison by Caligula and there slew himself with a knife he used to pare an apple. His body, to which a heavy weight was fastened, was thrown into the Tiber, but the water was so troubled that the Romans took out the body, carried it to Provence and threw it into the Rhone at Vienne. The

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., iv. 285. [2] *Ibid.* 365.
[3] *Ibid.* 321. [4] *Ibid.* v. 419. [5] *Ibid.* iv. 367.

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SAMSON CARRYING AWAY THE GATES OF GAZA

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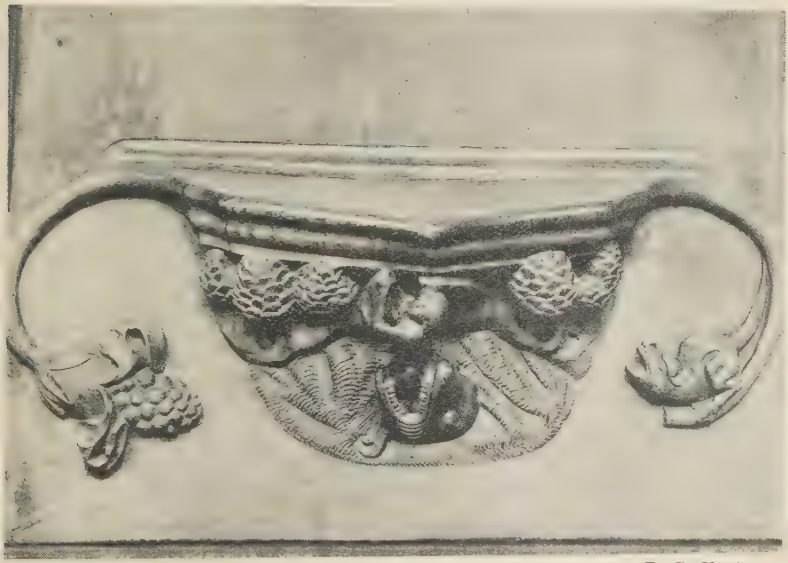

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JONAH ESCAPING FROM THE WHALE'S MOUTH

Ripon Cathedral

river refused to accept the impious burden, the corpse was taken out of the water and finally buried at Lausanne. But the men of the place, "troubled with that carrion", threw him into a pit enclosed with hills, where terrible voices and sounds are heard. This statement suggests that a pond on the top of Mount Pilatus was Pilate's last resting-place, but it is probable that the mountain was so called because it was *pileatus* or shrouded in mist; modern tourists will have no difficulty in accepting the latter explanation.

Otto of Freising[1] states that Pilate wrote an account of the resurrection and ascent of Christ and sent it to Tiberius. The Emperor ordered the Senate to enrol Christ among the gods, but they refused, and many were slain in consequence by order of Tiberius. "This was done by God's will it is thought, lest the faith of Christ should seem to have gained support from a heathen and authority from an earthly prince." Tiberius banished from Jerusalem or condemned to perpetual slavery those who had persecuted Christ. According to Otto, Pilate fled from Rome to Gaul and was drowned in the Rhone at Vienne.

The Vernicle.

A famous legend tells that, when Christ was going to be crucified, St. Veronica wiped the sweat from His face with a napkin, and the napkin ever preserved the impression of Our Lord's face. St. Veronica gave the "Vernicle" to Vespasian, and he showed it to Titus whom it cured of leprosy. It is to-day preserved in one of the main pillars of St. Peter's at Rome.

[1] Pertz, iii. 138.

Longinus.

According to Higden,[1] Longinus, the centurion who pierced our Lord's side, was punished by blindness. But he anointed his eyes with the blood that ran down his spear and his sight was immediately restored. He received instruction from the apostles, embraced Christianity and met a martyr's death at Caesarea.

The Apostles.

After the Crucifixion the earth was divided among the apostles.[2] Peter received Rome, "the mistress of the world"; Paul received Greece, "the most learned of countries and the fountain of all philosophy"; Asia was assigned to John, Achaia to Andrew, Ethiopia to Matthew, the Indies to Thomas and Bartholomew, Egypt and Mesopotamia to Simon and Thaddeus, Hieropolis to Philip. James remained in Palestine and ruled the church at Jerusalem. St. Thomas was unwilling to go to India. "I have not strength; I am weak. How can I, a Hebrew, teach the Indians?" Christ appeared to him in a vision and reassured him. "Fear not, Thomas; my grace is sufficient for thee." But he refused to go to India. Our Lord then sold Thomas to an Indian Merchant. The Merchant took him to India, where he worked as a carpenter before devoting himself to preaching the Gospel.[3]

Most of the apostles suffered martyrdom. In the time of Nero[4] the Jews took James up to a pinnacle of the Temple and cast him down headlong because he said he had seen Christ seated in

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., iv. 405.
[2] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 140.
[3] *Everyman's Book of Saints*, Clarke, Mowbrays, 339.
[4] *Ibid.* 144.

David prays to God for Forgiveness for his Sins

Book of Hours of Étienne Chevalier by Jean Fouquet
Additional MSS. 37421

British Museum

heaven. He was unhurt by the fall, but as he lay on the ground was struck by a fuller's pole[1] and so perished. Cleophas, the cousin of Christ, succeeded James at Jerusalem. A famous legend tells that after James, the cousin of Christ, was beheaded his body and head were placed in a ship at Jaffa and set adrift. The ship came to land in Spain, a vision revealed the nature of its cargo, and the relics of the saint were translated to Compostella about 800.

Simon Zelotes was sawn asunder in Persia; Philip, who preached in Asia and Scythia for many years, was crucified at Hieropolis. Thomas was martyred at Meliapur, which the Arabs call Beit-tuma, or the temple of Thomas. According to Isidore he was "pierced with a glaive[2] and so died", but Marco Polo[3] repeats an old legend that the saint was praying in a hermitage when a native shot an arrow at a peacock and struck him in his side. "Finding himself wounded he had time only to thank the Lord for all His mercies, and into His hands he resigned his spirit." St. Bartholomew was reputed to have been flayed alive in India. St. Andrew preached in Achaia and converted the wife of the Roman Pro-Consul. He was crucified, but, in order that his death might be more lingering, he was bound and not nailed to the cross. He lived for two days during which he preached the Gospel to twenty thousand men and converted many.

Joseph of Arimathea.

William of Malmesbury says that Joseph of Arimathea came to Britain in 63 and went in

[1] *Fullonis vecte percussus.* [2] A lance.

[3] *Travels of Marco Polo*, Everyman, 365.

a boat with twelve companions to the Isle of Avalon, in Somerset, and there planted his staff. The staff became the famous rose tree which blossomed every year at Glastonbury.

Simon Magus.

Simon Magus was said to have gone to Rome where he won the favour of the Emperor Nero by his magic. But St. Peter's opposition seriously hampered his operations; to prove his power he said that he would fling himself from a high tower and avoid any injury. He leaped from the tower and, to the amazement of the spectators, flew through the air. Peter, in the name of Christ, ordered the evil spirits that supported him to hold him up no longer; he crashed to the earth and broke his neck. At the end of Peter's life his friends, knowing that he would be put to death if he remained in Rome, persuaded him to flee from the city. At the gate he met Christ, who was passing in, and asked "*Domine, quo vadis?*" "I go to Rome to be crucified again", was the reply. Peter returned to Rome, where he was crucified head downwards, for he thought himself unworthy to suffer death in the same way as Our Lord. St. Paul was beheaded in Rome in 67.

St. John the Apostle was exiled by Domitian and recalled by Nerva. He "alone of all the apostles passed in peace to his Lord without the effusion of blood".[1]

The Virgin Mary.

Many legends of the Virgin Mary are recorded in the Apochrypha. "She occupied herself constantly with her wool work, so that in her tender years she could do all that old women were not

[1] Otto of Freising.

THE NATIVITY

Portion of an altar-piece in carved and painted wood. South German; beginning of the sixteenth century

Victoria and Albert Museum

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THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Font Castle Frome Church

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CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM
Norman Tympanum

Aston Eyre Church

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THE RESURRECTION

Ripon Cathedral

able to do. . . . She refreshed herself only with the food which she daily obtained from the hand of an angel; but the food which she obtained from the priests she divided among the poor."[1] She was chosen as one of "the seven undefiled virgins of the house of David" to assist in making a new veil for the Temple.[2] She died in Jerusalem, and as the twelve apostles were carrying her body to the tomb angels took it from them and carried it up to Heaven.[3] According to another account she went with St. John to Ephesus and was buried there. Saewulf[4] saw the marble table "on which the blessed Virgin Mary ate with the three Magi after they had given their offerings".

The little hamlet of Saintes Maries de la Mer, which lies on the shore of the Mediterranean, commemorates the old story that the Virgin Mary, Mary the sister of Lazarus and Mary Magdalene drifted in an open boat without a rudder to Provence, and preached Christianity to the heathen natives. Sir Theodore Cook[5] suggests that the origin of the tale is to be found in the history of the Roman General Marius. At the battle of Aix in 102 he utterly routed the Teutons who had invaded Provence, and his success was commemorated by sculpture representing Marius, whose toga was not unlike a woman's gown, his wife and a Syrian prophetess who accompanied him. The *tres Marii* in

[1] Quoted in *English Girlhood at School*, Dorothy Gardiner.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 18.
[4] *Ibid.* 44.
[5] *Old Provence*, Rivingtons.

course of time became *les trois Maries*, and the famous legend was an attempt to explain who they were.[1] Mary Magdalene was reputed to have spent the last thirty years of her life in a "right sharp desert" near Marseilles;[2] she is said to have been buried at Aix, but her relics were afterwards removed to Vézelay.

[1] But see *A Wayfarer in Provence*, Robson, Methuen, 116.
[2] *Everyman's Book of Saints*, 193.

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Ripon

THE CRUCIFIXION

From the York Manual, 1509

Ripon Cathedral Library

On the arm of the left-hand cross, on which the repentant thief has been crucified, is an angel with a goblet giving a refreshing drink to the departing soul of the thief. On the arm of the right-hand cross stands a devil, who is giving a thrashing to the departing soul of the unrepentant thief.

CHAPTER II

GOD, CHRIST AND THE VIRGIN MARY

Of God

"God," said Thomas Aquinas,[1] "who is eternal, incomprehensible and of infinite power, doeth things great and unsearchable in heaven and in earth, and there is no tracing out of His marvellous works." But while no man could comprehend God certain aspects of His power were clearly understood.

Belief in "God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth" was an essential part of Catholic doctrine.

Ambrose speaks of God as

> Creation's secret force,
> Thyself unmoved, all motion's source.

He pictures Him as

> Creator of the earth and sky
> Ruling the firmament on high,
> Clothing the day with robes of light,
> Blessing with gracious sleep the night.

God's power is shown also in the preservation of that which He has made: He "upholds all creation".[2]

[1] xviii. [2] Ambrose.

The organisation of society was His work: "God instituted the three orders of which society is composed," said the Seigneur de Berzé,[1] "the priests to serve Him, the knights to enforce justice and the labourers".

He ordained the moral law and gave His sanction to the means of grace. He enjoins on us chastity, charity, faith, repentance and confession.[2] "The first work or labour that a man should begin is to serve God . . . and to say prayers . . . is praising and giving thanks to God".[3]

God was regarded as "the inspector of hearts and the just judge". He punished individuals and nations who broke His laws, and punishment was often a means of grace, for "God chastens those whom He loves".[4] He gave immediate help to those who served Him faithfully.

The direct intervention of God in human affairs was an article of faith in the Middle Ages. The disasters of the time were regarded as divine punishment for sin; the ravages of ruthless invaders, pestilence, fire and earthquakes were the penalties which God imposed upon evil-doers. The capture of Ostia by the Saracens in 846 was the direct result of the sins of the Church.[5] Liutprand [6] says the inroads of the Saracens took place because God "was pleased because we had been unwilling to accept Him . . . to chastise us with these terrors". But lest the Saracens

[1] Langlois, *Vie en France au moyen âge*, i. 99.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Knight de la Tour Landry*, E.E.T.S., 5.
[4] *Gilles Li Muisis*, Langlois, i. 327.
[5] *Mediaeval Italy*, 24. [6] *Antapodosis*, Pertz, i. 58.

should become too haughty and say, " Where is now their God ? " God turned the hearts of the Christians so that they desired more eagerly to fight than previously they had desired to escape. Bede [1] regarded the ravages of the Saxons as " God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people " of Britain, and Higden [2] ascribes the invasions of the Danes, Normans and Scots to the bad character of the English, who were " given to treason, drunkenness and the negligence of the house of God ". " By the just judgment of God " the heathen Saxons were permitted to prevail over the Christians of Northern Germany, " so that through them our sin may be scourged away ".[3]

The Black Death was regarded as the punishment that God inflicted for the gross immorality of the time. The Abbé Gilles [4] laments that the pestilence has led to no permanent improvement. For a time women had put away their horns,—the fantastic peaks of hair which aroused the condemnation of the clergy,—but the Abbé complains that women were still *trop cornues*, while " men prefer concubines to wives ". The writer of the *Meaux Chronicle* [5] says that the Black Death appeared first among the Saracens. They thought it was God's vengeance for their sins, were inclined to win His mercy by accepting Christianity and sent messengers to Christendom. But when they found that the Black Death was devastating Europe they refused to

[1] Everyman's Library, 123. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., ii. 173.
[3] *Adam*, Pertz, ii. 128. [4] Langlois, i. 367.
[5] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., iii. 40.

accept a religion which had not preserved its professors from pestilence.

The failure of the Crusades was ascribed to sin. William, Archbishop of Tyre, made strenuous efforts to rouse the Christians of the West to wrest Palestine from Saladin but died broken-hearted at his failure, and asserted that the Latins of the East had forsaken God and God therefore forsook them. Fra Salimbene says that St. Louis' Crusade failed owing to the sins of the French, and Joinville paints the character of the Crusading army in the blackest colours.

Defeat in the field was not the only punishment for national or civic sin. The Pisans had long resisted the Church, and in 1284 a terrible plague raged in the city so that every house had its dead. "For the sword of the Lord's fury slew the Pisans because they rebelled long time against the Church."[1] The great earthquake which wrought havoc in Lombardy in 1222 was regarded as the expression of the wrath of God against a district in which heresy had long found a congenial home.[2] For her sins Parma was compelled to "drink the cup of God's fury".

The punishment of God fell heavily upon individual sinners. God sent upon Herod a painful and shameful disease because he had slain innocent children.[3] Henry IV. of England had allowed Archbishop Scrope to be executed for treason, and therefore God touched him and he became a leper.[4] When Geoffrey de Mande-

[1] Fra Salimbene in *From St. Francis to Dante*, Coulton, 216.
[2] *Ibid.* 12.
[3] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 132.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 556.

ville seized Romsey Abbey, the blood which issued from the walls of the church foretold the untimely end of the Earl and his followers. Geoffrey was shot in a skirmish " by a miserable foot soldier ",[1] and was the only man struck in a crowd of his friends ; the leader of his knights fell from his horse and dashed out his brains. The captain of his footmen, a Picard named Reyner, " whose special duty had been to destroy or burn churches ", sailed for Picardy, but the ship remained motionless. The sailors cast lots three times to find the man whose sins had caused the difficulty, and each time the lot fell on Reyner. So he and his wife and the plunder he had stolen from churches were set adrift in a boat, and the ship at once pursued its usual course. The boat " with its wicked cargo " was swamped, and Reyner and his wife perished.

Humbler sinners did not escape the vengeance of God. The monks of Tours had taken to evil ways, and two angels of God entered their dormitory at night and slew the evil-doers.[2] Fra Salimbene tells of a clerk who railed against God and was promptly slain by a thunderbolt from heaven. A certain monk " swelling with pride of the devil " smote Abbot Gezo of Novalitia on the cheek. God promptly punished him by sending a painful swelling on his arm, which was not cured until a faithful monk had made intercession for him.[3] Otto of Bamberg tells [4] how a woman of Poland was cutting her cornfield on Sunday, when suddenly she grew as stiff as a

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 127. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 293.
[3] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 81. [4] Pertz, iii. 76.

marble image " and breathed out her guilty soul into the fire of hell ". But in one case the sinner failed duly to profit by the warning he received. A heathen priest roused the people to destroy the Church of St. Adalbert [1] and was smiting the altar with a mason's hammer when God suddenly struck him. He fell fainting to the ground and then, recovering strength, declared " in vain do we strive. The God of the Christians is strong and cannot be expelled from our land by our strength. Let us accept Him but at the same time cleave to our old gods." He therefore built a heathen altar near the church and " continued to serve God and devils ". Injury to the servants of God sometimes met with prompt punishment. When Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, was journeying to Rome he was robbed of his goods in a town through which he was passing. Fire immediately broke out, and the town was nearly destroyed. The townsfolk, in terror, restored the Archbishop's property, and the fire was promptly extinguished by his prayers.

If sin led to punishment good deeds received their reward. Rahab was " blamed among the people " [2] but in return for her goodness in saving the spies God preserved her life when Jericho was destroyed. Success in battle was often regarded as the direct result of devotion. Clovis [3] became a Christian on the battlefield of Zulpich in 496, and God rewarded him with a complete victory over his foes. In 655 Oswy, King of

[1] *Herbord*, Pertz, iii. 130.
[2] *Knight de la Tour Landry*, E.E.T.S., 113.
[3] Hallam, i. 3.

Northumbria,[1] when about to join battle with Penda, the champion of heathenism, vowed that if he was successful he would give his daughter as an offering to God, and would endow a monastery with twelve farms. Immediately after his victory at Winwoodfield he dedicated his daughter Eanfled to God's service and endowed a monastery at Hartlepool. Cecilia, the daughter of William the Conqueror, was devoted to God before the Battle of Hastings and in due time became Abbess of Caen.[2] Christian soldiers, however humble, sometimes benefited by the direct interposition of God. A crusader [3] was struck by a dart which pierced his coat of mail, but which was "stopped by a certain writing hanging on his breast and fell out blunted and twisted as from an iron plate". The writing was a scroll inscribed with the name of God, and the pious chronicler appropriately adds "God is a wall of strength to them that hope in Him". When the Earl of Warwick was fleeing from England after his defeat at Ludford he found a one-masted fishing-smack on the north coast of Devon. The master had never been round Land's End and did not know the Channel. Warwick relying on "the favour of God and St. George" stripped to his doublet, took the helm, and brought the ship safely to Calais.

The favour of God was not confined to deeds of war, but was often manifested in the great and small affairs of life. God interfered to protect His servants from harm. At Bethlehem, Sir

[1] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 143.
[2] Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, iii. 395.
[3] *Chronicles of the Crusades*, Bohn, 127.

John Mandeville tells us,[1] a maiden, wrongly accused of crime, had been condemned to death. As she entered the fire she prayed to God for help and forthwith the flames were extinguished, the blazing faggots turned into red roses and those which had not caught fire into white. The penitent sinner sometimes received a convincing proof of divine forgiveness. On the very day on which Henry II. did penance for the murder of Becket "God gave into his hands William, King of Scots",[2] who was captured at Alnwick by Ranulf de Glanville, Henry's faithful servant. God sometimes intervened to deliver the faithful from minor troubles. A hermit living near St. Albans found that his devotions were so disturbed by the singing of a nightingale that he asked God to remove the nuisance. Thereafter no bird came within a mile of his cell, and he was able to pray in comfort.[3]

The wicked found their ultimate punishment in Hell;[4] the joys of Heaven[5] were the final reward of the good.

Of Christ

The idea of Christ as the Loving Saviour, ever present to inspire and help the faithful, profoundly affected the nobler minds of the Middle Ages. The hymns and pastoral treatises of the times display a passionate devotion to the person of Christ "the Lover of Mankind".[6] The very

[1] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 163.
[2] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 387.
[3] *Middle Ages*, Coulton, 194.
[4] Chapter V.
[5] Chapter V.
[6] John Damascene.

thought of Him filled the breast with sweetness.[1] The true believer longed for Him "a thousand times" and looked forward to complete union with Him.[2] "Keep close to Jesus both in life and death," said Thomas Aquinas.[3] "Love Him and keep Him for thy friend, who, when all go away, will not forsake thee." "Where wast thou hidden, Lord," asked St. Catherine of Siena, "these many days that I have sought Thee sorrowing?" "Daughter, I was all the while in thine own heart."

He was "the world's Redeemer",[4] the "Redeemer King"[5] to Whom was due all glory, laud and honour; He was the Fountain of Goodness, purifying unclean men with His most cleansing blood,[6] and healing those who were broken by sin with His "holy medicine".[7] As the Heavenly Shepherd He led His flock to "heavenly pastures ever new";[8] He gave rest to the weary and languid.[9]

The battle between good and evil was regarded as a personal struggle between Christ and the Devil.[10] Men found Christ not only their joy but their strong defence[11] and their one reliance,[12] and in the *Devil's Parliament*[13] Christ promises His disciples that devils shall flee before them. He drove away temptation and kept men from lying

[1] St. Bernard of Clairvaux. [2] *Ibid.* [3] vii.
[4] Fortunatus, 530–609.
[5] Theodulph of Orleans, *d.* 821.
[6] Thomas Aquinas. [7] St. Bernard of Clairvaux.
[8] Bede. [9] St. Stephen, 725–794.
[10] *Hymns to the Virgin*, E.E.T.S.; *The Devil's Parliament*, 51.
[11] St. Bernard. [12] Fortunatus. [13] E.E.T.S.

deed and lying word.[1] Christ's victory was assured. He "conquered Death and made Hell's squadron flee"; [2] He had "harrowed Hell"; He was "the unconquered Lion" who, by His resurrection, burst the dragon's chains; [3] by conquering death He gave life to men.[4]

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CHRIST IN JUDGMENT

Lincoln Cathedral

The world was to end with the awful Day of Wrath, when "Heaven and Earth will pass away".[5] On that day God would entrust to Christ the task of judging the quick and the

[1] Prudentius.
[2] Fortunatus.
[3] Fulbert of Chartres, *c.* 1000.
[4] Gregory the Great.
[5] Thomas of Celano.

dead; He who had suffered torture and crucifixion would be master of earth and heaven and demons.[1] This aspect of Christ inspired two famous pictures. In his picture of Christ as Judge, which is found on the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa, Orcagna represents Him as benevolent but terrible in His Majesty. In the figure of the Avenging Christ, the central figure of Michelangelo's "Last Judgment", Christ appears as the stern judge inflicting heavy though just punishment upon those who have broken His laws.

Christ not only inspired the hearts of men but sometimes appeared in bodily form to warn or encourage them. Peter the Hermit was encouraged in his attempt to start the Crusades by a vision of Christ: "I who speak with thee am Jesus Christ, and I will be with thee".[2] The Emperor Basil had slain his predecessor. Christ came to him holding the hand of the murdered Michael and asked, "Basil, why didst thou slay thy lord the Emperor Michael?" Basil confessed his sin with tears and groans and built a costly and wonderful church in honour of St. Michael in expiation of his deed.[3] Christ appeared to Peter, the famous priest of Pontefract, in the likeness of a child between the priest's hands, and taught him many things, which he afterwards repeated to bishops and other people of position.[4]

[1] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 376.
[2] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 58.
[3] Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, Pertz, ii. 88.
[4] Higden, *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 194.

He appeared in similar form to Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury, as he was walking in a meadow near Oxford. "Hail! my beloved. I wonder that thou dost not recognise me; especially since I keep close to thy side in the schools and other places. Print every night on thine own forehead what thou seest written on my face." The writing was "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews".[1] Sometimes Christ appeared in disguise. Fulk the Good, Count of Anjou, offered money to a leper, who refused to accept the gift. The Count then wrapped the leper in his own cloak and carried the "pious burden" two leagues to the Church of St. Martin that he might make his confession. Next night while the Count, clad in clerical dress, "enjoyed a divine sleep in the choir of the church", St. Martin appeared to him and said, "That leprous man was Christ, whom you have often piously worshipped; to-day you have honoured Him in His own person by carrying Him on your shoulders".[2]

Those who served Christ sometimes found a due reward on earth. The Knight de la Tour Landry [3] tells of a woman who fasted on Friday and Saturday in honour of Christ and Our Lady. She fell into a well, but the water was made hard beneath her weight, and she was miraculously kept up until her friends rescued her. Sometimes those who little deserved divine help profited by holy days. A certain robber had been captured and imprisoned in a monastery;

[1] Higden, *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 218.
[2] *Ralph de Diceto*, R.S., ii. 268. [3] E.E.T.S. 10.

early on Christmas morning he was miraculously set free from his bonds. His guards were so astonished that they allowed him to depart without further punishment.[1]

Christ vouchsafed His aid, even in the ordinary affairs of life. A woman whose bees were dying off took the Lord's body, which she had received in Communion, and laid it on their hive. The bees were restored to health and built a chapel of honeycomb. Another woman placed the Lord's body on her cabbages and thus protected them from caterpillars.[2]

Although many points of Catholic doctrine were challenged by heretics, the idea of Christ as the Saviour, Redeemer and Judge of men was universally accepted. The Templars were accused of denying Christ and of showing that they rejected Him by spitting on the Cross.[3] But they pleaded that although some of them had appeared to spit upon the Cross they had really taken care to miss the Cross, and one asserted that while pretending to spit on the Cross he had really spat upon his own hands.[4] The evidence produced against the Templars was so flimsy that no real proof was brought that they had actually denied Christ.

The men of the Middle Ages strongly believed in the personality of Christ and great kings were proud to acknowledge His supremacy. One of the best-known stories of the time tells how Canute, wishing to reprove his courtiers for say-

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 82.
[2] *The Middle Ages*, Coulton, 71.
[3] Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vii. 194. [4] *Ibid.* 247.

ing that even the sea would obey him, called on the waves to retire. Three or four times he repeated his order and then, finding that the order produced no effect, he took off his crown, and, barefooted, carried it with his own hands and laid it as an offering on the altar, ordering it to be fixed to the head of a crucifix. "Lord, King, Jesus Christ," he prayed, "all powerful, Thou alone shouldst be called King, for Thou rulest the heavens and the depths and givest command to sea and winds."[1] Henry II., whose life was sadly inconsistent with the teaching of Christ, was so affected by this story that he refused to wear his crown again. After the capture of Jerusalem by the soldiers of the First Crusade in 1099 Godfrey de Bouillon was elected king of the newly founded Kingdom of Jerusalem. But he refused to take the title of king in the place where Christ had worn a crown of thorns, and was content to be called "Baron and Defender of the Holy Sepulchre".

Of the Virgin Mary

Mary, the Virgin Mother of Christ, receives due honour in the many devotional works in which the piety of the Middle Ages found expression. In the *Five Joys of the Virgin*[2] the happiness of Mary centres round Christ. She was transported with joy when she first learned that she would bear Jesus, when she actually bore Him,

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 308.
[2] E.E.T.S. xlix. 87.

when He rose from the dead, when He ascended into Heaven, and when she ascended to Heaven and saw Him again face to face.

The Virgin herself possessed the power of saving men from sin. She could help the repentant sinner to subdue the flesh and to love God and man.[1] He could confidently ask her to help him to amend his life and bring him to everlasting bliss.[2] The Goodman of Paris bade his wife pray to the Virgin that in the hour of death she might so help her suppliant that "I may see thee with the company of angels and the knighthood of Paradise.[3] An Abbot of Meaux[4] declared that "on Mary after God depends our hope and consolation".

But the Virgin was generally regarded as a powerful advocate whose influence with her Son might win mercy for wrong-doers. The Goodman of Paris told his wife that "if the blessed Virgin Mary, His mother, plead not for us as advocate, I can in no wise see how we may escape being, by the good judgment of that Sovereign Judge, punished and chained to the gibbet of Hell for ever".[5] She can present the soul of the believer to Christ and by her prayers ensure the "possession of eternal peace and the joy that shall never fail".[6] Sinful man depended upon her kindly aid for she "is the only hope of reconciliation for man, the main cause of eternal salvation".[7]

[1] E.E.T.S. ix. 193.
[2] *Hymns to the Virgin*, E.E.T.S., viii.
[3] *Goodman of Paris*, 49.
[4] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 197.
[5] *Goodman of Paris*, 60.
[6] *Ibid.* 49.
[7] Vincent of Beauvais.

A quaint mediaeval hymn, *The Song of the Virgin*,[1] illustrates her power as an intercessor:

One that is so fair and bright,
Velut maris stella;
Brighter than the day's light,
Parens et puella.
I cry to thee, then look on me.
Lady pray thy Son for me,
Tam pia,
That I may come to thee,
Maria.

Her help sometimes secured victory for those who trusted in her. After the Duke of Guelders had defeated the Brabanters before Grave, he went to the Church of Our Lady at Nimwegen, stripped off his armour and offered it on the altar before her image, "in which image he had great faith", and whose help he had sought as he set out to battle.

She often helped her faithful servants in time of sickness, danger or difficulty. Her aid was earnestly sought by women in travail. When Fulbert, Bishop of Chartres, lay at the point of death he called upon Our Lady, whom he had faithfully served, and she restored him to perfect health by dropping three drops of her own milk in his face.[2] A boy who was being burned at the stake at Avignon in 1320 prayed to her for aid; she appeared to him in the fire and saved him from death, although a companion in misfortune, who had not sought her aid, was burned to ashes.[3] When a gifted sculptor, Tudilo, a monk of St.

[1] E.E.T.S. ix. 194. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 39.
[3] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 321.

In Response to his Mother's Prayers the Virgin Mary saves a Youth who has been hanged on a Gibbet

Douce Manuscript 374 Bodleian Library

Gall, was carving a statue of the Virgin, a "radiant lady" stood by him and handed him his tools; when the statue was completed there appeared on it the inscription "Mary herself vouchsafed to carve all this work".[1]

At times she came to give advice or warning. Anschar, at the age of thirteen, dreamed that he saw the dearly loved mother whom he had lately lost, clad in white apparel and in attendance on the Virgin. He tried in vain to reach his mother and the Virgin asked, "My son, wouldst thou join thy mother?" He answered, "Most earnestly do I wish it". "He who would come to us must flee those vanities which we abhor." He devoted himself to prayer and study, became a monk of the Abbey of Corbey and, about 837, converted Sweden to Christianity.[2] Men believed that, when theologians raged furiously together in Paris, the figure of the Virgin in one of the finest windows in Sainte Chapelle bowed her head as a sign that she assented to the doctrines of Duns Scotus.

Swift punishment often came upon those who affronted the Virgin Mary. Leopold, a friend of the Emperor Henry IV., had seized land belonging to the Abbey of Augsburg. "Soon after Leopold was punished for disturbing the property of Holy Mary, for as he was riding his horse stumbled, he was pierced by his own sword and died."[3] St. Mercury, who was said to have slain with his lance the Emperor Julian the Apostate, showed

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 24.
[2] Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, iii. 287.
[3] *Lamberti Annales*, Pertz, ii. 93.

himself ever ready to avenge the wrongs of the Virgin. When Nico de Leccaterra set fire to the Church of the Virgin at Magreba a lance was thrown and suddenly struck him dead. No man saw the thrower, but the devout recognised the hand of St. Mercury.[1]

Modern critics might doubt whether the help of the Virgin was always justified. Hallam[2] tells of a thief who was wont to pray for the help of the Virgin before starting operations. He was caught and sentenced to be hanged. But the Virgin held up his feet "with her white hands" for two days and saved his life. She afterwards turned aside the sword with which the justly exasperated executioner tried to slay him. The thief, thus miraculously saved, entered a monastery. The Franciscans were devoted to Our Lady, but their devotion did not save them from gross immorality. King Edward III. found that his prayers to the Virgin had not brought him the results he desired. In 1341 he "complained" to Our Lady because, although she had sent him favourable wind and weather when he was in France, "on my return to England I suffer excessive misfortune".[3]

[1] *St. Francis to Dante*, Coulton, 206. [2] iii. 300.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 340.

A Devil tries to drown a Sinful Monk

Tams, Cambridge

Tams, Cambridge

The Virgin Mary rescues the Monk from drowning
Carew Poyntz Horae, 1350–1360
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

CHAPTER III

SIN, PENANCE AND THE LAST JUDGMENT

St. Augustine declared that "no sober man resisteth reason or Scripture, and no true Christian man opposeth the Church".[1] Belief in the teaching of Scripture, reinforced as it was by the authority of the Church, did help many to live good lives; but often belief was merely a pious opinion which had but little practical effect upon conduct. The moral tone of the Middle Ages was low, "lechery" was rampant in all classes of society, and the barefaced treachery and the heartless cruelty of the times find ample illustration in all contemporary writers. Grosseteste[2] declared before the Pope that Christians were "almost wholly separated from Christ and incorporate with the Devil through the seven deadly sins".

Sin

But Sin did not go unnoticed or unrebuked. Honest laymen, like the Goodman of Paris, joined with the clergy to denounce the faults of the age and to point out the way of salvation.

The Goodman of Paris discourses at length on the seven deadly sins—Pride, Envy, Wrath, Sloth,

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., iv. 263.

[2] Bishop of Lincoln.

Avarice, Gluttony and Lechery—and commends the opposite virtues of Humility, Lovingkindness, Gentleness, Diligence, Generosity, Temperance and Chastity.

The Seven Deadly Sins.

Pride induces men to disobey God. It leads to vainglory, which "is the Devil's coin with which he buys all the fair commodities in this world's market, and the commodities are the gifts of nature and of fortune and of mercy that God has given to man and woman".[1] Hypocrisy, which leads men to cloak secret sin by a pretence of holiness, discord and strife also arise out of pride.

Envy includes "hatred, malice, murmuring, detraction and being glad of another's ill". Wrath grows out of Envy. Sloth grows out of idleness and includes Carnality. "Carnality is when one seeks the desire of the flesh, so as to sleep in good beds and to rest long, and to be late abed, and in the morn when one is in great ease in one's bed and hears the bell ringing for Mass, one pays no attention and turns over upon the other side to sleep again."[2] The writer of one of the *Hymns to the Virgin*[3] confesses "I have lived in the Devil's service with late suppers and late rising". Men of the time were very prone to the sins of the flesh. After death the soul shall curse the body and say, "Through thee I shall have fiends for fellows . . . and I shall burn in fire and shiver in ice".[4]

Avarice leads to theft, rapine, fraud, deceit, usury, gambling and simony. Gluttony consists

[1] *Goodman of Paris*, 66.
[2] *Ibid.* 77.
[3] E.E.T.S. 56.
[4] E.E.T.S. xlix. 173.

partly of over-indulgence in meat and drink. God commands us to go to church and rise early and the glutton saith, "I must sleep. I was drunk yesterday. The church is not a hare, it will very well wait for me." The sin of Lechery is born of excess in eating and drinking.[1] Inordinate desire may be tamed by a diet of bread and water.[2] Gluttony, according to the Goodman, also includes foolish speaking in many ways, such as swearing, gossiping and grumbling.[3]

Pride.

The Goodman's opinion that "Pride is the beginning and root of all other sins" is supported by Robert of Blois.[4] God hates Pride worse than any other sin, and it is the first of sins, for Pride led Adam and Eve to disobey God. Some go to hell through Pride in their long hair, or in their long robes which sweep up the filth.[5] St. Martin, who cut short his cloak, did not wear such robes. As a safeguard against Pride men were bidden to kiss the earth and look on dead men's bones.[6]

The author of *Les Quatre Âges de l'Homme* classifies Virtues and Vices according to the conditions in which they are found. Chastity is the special virtue of youth, Generosity of poverty, Humility of high position, Abstinence of plenty. Pride is liable to attack the poor, Luxury the aged, Greed the rich, Laziness the young.

Protection against Sin

The Mass.

Sin may be averted by faithful attendance at Mass, but secular thoughts must be avoided,

[1] E.E.T.S. xlix. 86.
[2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S.
[3] *Ibid.* 84.
[4] Langlois, i. 189.
[5] *Ibid.* i. 167.
[6] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S. 7.

"when men and women be at church to hear divine service, their hearts should not be at home, nor in the fields, nor in any other things of this world".[1] The great preacher Berthold of Ratisbon declared that one man would derive more spiritual profit from one Mass than another would get from a six weeks' Pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostella. Simeon of Durham[2] maintained that when the Mass was celebrated by a sinful priest a portion of the body and blood turned black and tasted bitter to the communicants. But this was not the general opinion; and Wycliffe's assertion that communion was founded in grace and that a service was valueless if celebrated by a sinful priest was denounced as heresy. The Lollards treated the Mass with contempt. They were sometimes called the "Hooded Men", because they refused to let their hoods down in the presence of the sacred elements. The worst of all was "John Montague, for he received the Sacrament in church and spat it into his hand and bare it home and ate it with his oysters".[3]

Prayer. Prayer, too, is a safeguard against Sin. But Prayer must be sincere, and the Franciscans taught men that they must "never pray without sighs". Tears were a necessary accompaniment of sincere Prayer. St. Louis of France regretted that he could not weep at prayers, and St. Umbilica nearly blinded herself by putting

[1] *Goodman of Paris*, 54. [2] R.S. 93.

[3] Capgrave, R.S., 244-245. John Montague, Earl of Salisbury, was executed at Cirencester in 1400.

quicklime in her eyes to promote the same end.[1]

Good works protect the doer from sin, for the Devil finds it hard to attract a man who is intent upon good works. It is "prudent to send, before death, a treasure of fasts, prayers, alms and repentance", for such an offer wins the favour of God.[2] "Give much in alms", said Lanfranc, "and all things are clean to you."[3] Queen Matilda, the wife of Henry I. of England, afforded a worthy example to her contemporaries. For she was "nought squaymous[4] to wash sick men's feet and touch ulcers with her hands, to kiss sick men, to set before them a dinner-table and to serve them".[5] David, Matilda's brother, came to visit his dearly beloved sister in 1105. He found her house full of lepers, and the queen, who had cast off her royal robe and was simply dressed in linen cloth, washed the lepers' feet, wiped them and then kissed them. He said that if the king knew it, "he would never kiss with the royal lips your mouth polluted with the poison of the feet of lepers". "Who does not know", answered the queen, "that the feet of the Eternal King are easier to bear than the lips of a mortal king? In serving the poor I serve Him who says, 'What ye have done to one of my little ones ye have done unto Me'." She bade him follow her example, but he, "wrinkling his

Good Works.

[1] *Mediaeval Studies*, Coulton.
[2] *Quatre Âges de l'Homme*, Langlois, i. 225.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 336.
[4] Reluctant.
[5] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 261.

nostrils, flatly refused ".[1] St. Louis regularly washed the feet of the poor on Holy Thursday, but the faithful Joinville refused to follow his Master's lead. " Oh ! for shame of us ; never will I wash the feet of such fellows." [2]

Sickness.

Sickness was regarded as a purge for sins. Radpert, a monk of St. Gall, being sick unto death, " prayed God to cook him longer in the pains of that sickness whereby he was made into a radiant bread and passed between the hands of his disciples into Paradise, as we firmly believe ".[3]

Confession and Penance

Con-fession.

True Confession, which involved contrition for sin, and was followed by Penance, secured pardon for sin which had been committed. In *The Parish Priest* [4] priests are bidden to inquire at Confession, not only if deadly sin has been committed, but also " hast thou neglected to go to church for heat or cold ? " ; " hast thou had a grudge against God for anything ? " ; " hast thou heard sermons without devotion or neglected works of mercy ? " ; " or left open a lych gate so that beasts have got into the churchyard ? " Those who died without Confession were doomed to Hell, and the Knight de la Tour Landry [5] tells that when a woman was buried unshrived the earth smoked and quaked and great lamentation was heard in her grave.

[1] *Matthew Paris*, Everyman, 201.
[2] *Chronicles of the Crusades*, Joinville, 354.
[3] *Mediaeval Garner*, 24.
[4] E.E.T.S. xxxv. 7.
[5] E.E.T.S. 11.

Physical Punishment.

Penance often took the form of physical punishment. In contrition for the murder of Becket, Henry II. walked barefooted the last three miles of the road to Canterbury, and, on July 12, 1174, was scourged by the monks of Canterbury in the place where the Archbishop had perished. As the Emperor Otto IV. lay on his death-bed he submitted to chastisement at the hands of the meanest of his kitchen servants, and even incited them to make his punishment as hard as possible, "Strike harder, spare not the hardened sinner". Gibbon states[1] that three thousand lashes were regarded as the equivalent of a year of Penance, and duly chronicles the skill and valour of a famous hermit, St. Dominic of the Cuirass,[2] who in six days could inflict three hundred thousand stripes and so discharge a whole century of Penance.

Self-scourging was a potent means of grace. He who scourged himself while he chanted twenty psalms gained the remission of a hundred years of Penance. In the middle of the fourteenth century the Flagellants[3] attracted much attention. They included men, women and children who stripped themselves to the waist, shrouded their faces and went in procession scourging themselves until their course was marked with blood. The usual period of flagellation was thirty-three and a half days, corresponding to the years of Our Lord's Life.[4]

[1] vi. 408.

[2] *Dominicus Loricatus.*

[3] Latin *flagellum*, "a whip".

[4] *History of Latin Christianity*, vi. 334.

Other forms of Penance.

Penance took many forms. Service on the Crusades or a pilgrimage to the Holy Land secured forgiveness for sins, and many a turbulent baron went to Palestine to atone for cruelties committed on fellow-Christians at home by inflicting cruelties upon infidels abroad. Fulk the Black, Count of Anjou, who had crowned a life of infamy by burning his wife in the market-place of Angers, was impelled by "fear of Gehenna" to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Henry II. as part of his Penance for the murder of Becket undertook to keep two hundred knights to defend the Holy Land for one year.[1]

Alfonso, King of Naples, was so terrified at the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. in 1492 that he cried out that the stones and trees shouted aloud, "France, France!". He fled to Spain "taking all sorts of wines (which he loved above all things) and seeds for his gardens". There he did Penance for his many sins by living a strict and austere life with the monks of a local monastery. He and his son died soon afterwards, and Commines[2] charitably thought that his Penance had opened the gates of Paradise for him, and hoped that "they are better where they are, than they were in this world".

Becket felt that he had done wrong in accepting the Constitutions of Clarendon; he therefore imposed a severe penance and suspended himself from the privilege of offering the sacrifice on the altar.[3]

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 372. [2] Bohn, ii. 155.
[3] *History of Latin Christianity*, v. 52.

Penance could be remitted by the Pope and wealthy sinners profited by a visit to Rome, "where is much more pardon than I could tell with all my might".[1] "Everything can be bought with money at Rome," said an adverse critic. The remission of no less than fourteen thousand years of Penance was secured by giving alms at St. Thomas' Church on the anniversary of the consecration of St. Peter's. All pardons were doubled in Lent, and attendance at St. Peter's every Sunday for one year earned as much pardon as a pilgrimage to St. James, Compostella. A pilgrim who visited Rome in the Jubilee year received pardon for all his sins; "the Pope ordered the Angels of Paradise that they should introduce the soul of the pilgrim into the joys of Paradise after it had been thoroughly absolved in Purgatory".[2] Remission of Penance.

The good deeds of Christ, the Virgin and the Saints made up a Treasury of Merits from which the Popes could make distribution to the faithful on payment of money, and remission of Penance was given at a fixed rate. Twenty-six solidi of silver (£4) were regarded as the equivalent of one year of Penance for the rich; the poor paid only three solidi for the same privilege.[3] The lavish donations of Pepin and Charlemagne are proofs, not so much that the donors were faithful servants of the Church, as that they were greater sinners than most men. The sale of Indulgences proved a most lucrative source of income to the Popes. At the Jubilee of Boniface VIII. in 1300

[1] *Stacions of the Cross*, E.E.T.S., 24.
[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., iii. 88.
[3] Gibbon, vi. 408.

the priests raked the gold and silver coins from the altar of St. Peter's for they were too numerous to be counted.[1]

Pardoners.

The Pardoners who were authorised by the Pope to sell Indulgences were one of the greatest scandals of the age. They traversed Europe with wallets,

> Brimful of pardons come from Rome all hot.[2]

As Bishop Gardiner said, "Heaven was sold for a little money". Pardons were bought sometimes for a drink of wine or beer, sometimes, as Chancellor Gascoigne asserted in 1450, "for fourpence, or the stake of a game of ball". Berthold of Ratisbon justly denounced these "penny preachers" as "the devil's huntsmen".

The whole system was obviously corrupt. It promoted sin, for men thought that they could evade punishment by money payments. It sometimes prevented the sinner from making retribution. When his Confessor urged Henry IV. to purge his soul of the guilt he had incurred by the murder of Richard II., the execution of Archbishop Scrope and the seizure of the crown, he refused because the Pope had set him Penance and granted absolution for the first two sins, and his children would not agree that the crown should go out of his family.[3] The conscience of Europe was aroused against the practice. The sale of Indulgences by Tetzel in Germany proved the immediate cause of the Reformation.

[1] Gibbon, vii. 382. [2] Chaucer.
[3] Capgrave, R.S., 302.

The Last Judgment

The certainty of death and the Last Judgment was a commonplace of the Middle Ages. "It is a well-known truth that nothing is more certain than death."[1] It came into the world through the envy of the Devil[2] and was followed by the Judgment. "Lords," said the Seigneur de Berzé,[3] "you who love this Age and desire its joys think of death. . . . Let us take care to prepare ourselves for the Judgment before it is too late." The Certainty of Death.

The body and soul will rise again. Even though the former has been drowned in the waves, consumed by flames, reduced to ashes in the earth or devoured and digested by beasts, it will still be restored to its former shape before the Day of Judgment. But only the normal bodies of rational men will be so restored; giants, dwarfs, "Ethiopians with their foul deformity of colour", fauns or hermaphrodites will not rise again.[4] The Resurrection of the Body.

The Church will be warned of the Day of Judgment by six "trumpets" or warnings given in different ages. The final summons will be given by the seventh trumpet, which will be followed immediately by the Resurrection.[5] Warnings and Signs.

Before the last day Antichrist will be overcome by Enoch and Elijah, who are yet living and will return to save the world. For three years and a half the Church of God will be oppressed by

[1] *Froissart*, Everyman's Library, 414.
[2] E.E.T.S. xlix. 65.
[3] Langlois, i. 104.
[4] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 369, 371.
[5] *Ibid.* 375.

a terrible persecution. When this period has elapsed the Jews will be converted and a space of time will be granted to sinners for repentance.[1]

Physical signs will give further warning of the impending doom. Red rain will fall as bitter as gall, the stars will drop from the sky, the sun will turn black, animals will lift their heads to heaven, trees will be overturned, hills will fill up the valleys and the sea will rise and fall. Animals will speak with human voice. Great storms will rage, and the rainbow will be twisted.[2]

The Day of Judgment.

When all the signs have been accomplished the Day of Judgment will come as a thief in the night. All the dead will come to Mount Olivet. The angels will bring forth the cross, nails and scourge, which were the instruments of Our Lord's Passion. Christ will show His wounds to men and will remind them—

> Thou wouldst not help Me at my need,
> Man, oft thou hast forsaken Me.

Then the Virgin Mary will intervene and beg Christ not to lose His handiwork. True believers will be saved by the power and help of Christ and will find safety in Heaven, but the wicked shall perish.

> My bliss shall they never see,
> Into pain they shall go,
> To have it without end.[3]

Finally on that awful day the whole world will be consumed by fire, and Heaven and Earth will pass away.

[1] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 364.
[2] *Hymns to the Virgin*, E.E.T.S., 118. [3] *Ibid.* 124-125.

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THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

B. C. Clayton,
Ross-on-Wye

Worcester Cathedral

CHAPTER IV

PREACHING, EXCOMMUNICATION AND INTERDICT

It was the duty of the Roman Catholic Church to maintain the faith which had been delivered to the saints and expounded by Church Councils; to punish the sinner and to help men to live godly, righteous and sober lives.

Preaching

At a time when books were written in Latin, which very few could read, preaching became a most important means of expounding belief, teaching uprightness and denouncing sin and corruption.

John of Vicenza.

The preaching of John of Vicenza exercised great influence in Lombardy in the thirteenth century. He spoke from a platform sixty feet high, and it was said that four hundred thousand people could hear his words. On August 28, 1233, the people of Paquara in the March of Ancona gathered to hear him. "He exhorted them to peace in a manner so irresistible that the greatest enemies, setting aside their animosities, pardoned and embraced each other, and all, with tears of joy, celebrated the warm charity of this man of

God."[1] At Bologna he led the women to adopt a more modest attire; they threw aside their ribbons and hid their faces in veils. He was credited with the power of raising the dead. But his highly emotional style had little permanent influence. He fell into disrepute, and when he wished to preach in Florence the Florentines refused to allow him to enter. "Our city is populous enough; we have no room for the dead he would raise."[2]

Berthold of Ratisbon.

Berthold of Ratisbon thundered against the sins of the age, particularly immorality, and in one of his sermons gave excellent advice to girls, although in language rather more free than modern usage permits. He, too, possessed a stentorian voice. He used to preach from the top of a tower from which a flag was flying. The flag showed the direction of the wind, and the audience took their places so that they could hear best. A peasant said that he had heard Berthold preach when he was three miles away, but the preacher refused to accept his statement, although the hearer repeated his sermon.

Savonarola.

One of the most famous preachers of the times was Savonarola. He arrived on foot at Florence in 1489 and lodged in the Convent of St. Mark. He says, "I began publicly to expound the Revelation in our Church of St. Mark. During the course of the year (1490) I continued to develop to the Florentines these three propositions: that the Church would be renewed in our time; that before that renovation God would

[1] Sismondi, *Italian Republics*, 61.
[2] *History of Latin Christianity*, vi. 208.

strike all Italy with a fearful chastisement ; that these things would happen shortly." In ringing tones and plain language he denounced " the sins of you people, you fathers and mothers, you young men, you maidens, you children that lisp blasphemy ".[1] The wickedness of Italy was the cause of the impending doom, and he thundered against all kinds of iniquity in unmeasured terms. " These sermons ", says a contemporary witness, " caused such terror, alarm, sobbing and tears that everyone passed through the streets without speaking, more dead than alive."

The Friars, too, particularly the Dominicans or Friar Preachers, raised up their voices against the sins of the age and, at street corner and in market-place, urged men to repent and to sin no more. Hallam [2] tells of a friar whose preaching led to instant reformation in the dissolute city of Pavia.

Frère Maillard.

Great preachers dealt faithfully with all the faults of the age. In 1508 Frère Maillard, the Savonarola of France, preached his famous sermons at the Church of St. Jean-en-Grève in Paris. He attacked the money-changers who clipped money, the grocer who pressed down his scale with his finger, the monks who sold more Masses than they could ever find time to say, ladies who rouged their cheeks and monks who kept taverns. The sermons preached at Canterbury by Abbot Eustace led many to give up usury and Sunday trading and to provide lights for the altar.[3]

[1] *Short History of the Renaissance in Italy*, Symonds, 101-103.
[2] iii. 298.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 182.

Preaching and the Crusades.

The Crusades were the direct result of preaching. Peter the Hermit aroused the anger of Western Europe by his account of the cruelties inflicted by the Turks on pilgrims to the Holy Land. "He rode on a mule, with a crucifix in his hand, his head and feet bare; his dress was a long robe girt with a cord and a hermit's cloak of the coarsest stuff. He preached in the pulpits, in the roads, in the market-places. . . . His influence was extraordinary. . . . Old enemies came to be reconciled; the worldliest to forswear the world. . . . His wonders were repeated from mouth to mouth; all ages, both sexes, crowded to touch his garments; the very hairs which dropped from his mule were treasured as relics."[1] The preaching of Peter the Hermit prepared the way for the great sermon that Pope Urban II. delivered from a high scaffold in the market-place of Clermont on November 18, 1095. "Never, perhaps," says Milman, "did a single speech of man work such extraordinary and lasting results." The Pope spoke of the sufferings of the pilgrims, urged his hearers to cease warring one with another and to unite their forces to wrest the Holy Land from the Turks. He assured them of rich rewards and promised to absolve from sin all who took the cross. Inspired by his words the vast congregation shouted, *Deus vult*, which became the war-cry of the Crusaders. "It is indeed the will of God," answered the Pope, "and let this memorable word, the inspiration surely of the Holy Spirit, be ever adopted as your cry of battle,

[1] Milman, *Latin Christianity*, iv. 178.

to animate the devotion and courage of the champions of Christ. His Cross is the symbol of your salvation: wear it, a red, a bloody cross, as an external mark on your breasts or shoulders, as a pledge of your sacred and irrevocable engagement." [1] The Pope's hearers, stirred to enthusiasm by his words, took the cross, and so the First Crusade began.

The preaching of St. Bernard was one of the main causes of the Second Crusade, and proved so effective that "mothers hid their sons, wives their husbands, and companions their friends", lest they should be induced to take the cross. Early in 1146 he persuaded Louis VII. to take the cross at Vézelay, and so roused the people by the sermon he preached that he had to tear up his own clothes to satisfy their demand for crosses. The Emperor Conrad III. was unwilling to go on the Crusade, but Bernard went to Speyer for Christmas, preached to the Emperor and his courtiers, and urged them to undertake the service of Christ, lest on the Judgment Day Christ should ask, "Oh, man, how have I failed in ought of My duty to thee?" Conrad was moved to tears by Bernard's eloquence, and said, "That which I am commanded to do by the Lord, I am willing to do for His service". He took the cross from Bernard's hands and received the banner that hung from the altar as his standard in the Holy War.

The eloquent Berter of Orleans roused the French to take part in the Third Crusade. Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Gir-

[1] Quoted by Gibbon, vi. 404.

aldus Cambrensis, Archdeacon of Brecon, journeyed through Wales, urging the people to go on the Crusade. They met with much success, and Giraldus was obviously proud of the result of the sermon he delivered at Haverfordwest, where, "although the Archdeacon addressed them both in the Latin and French tongues, those persons who understood neither of those languages were equally affected and flocked in great multitudes to the cross".[1]

Political Sermons.

The pulpit was sometimes used for political purposes or to advance heterodox religious views. The sermons John Huss preached against Indulgences in Bethlehem Chapel at Prague strengthened the opposition of his fellow-countrymen to the authority of the Pope and were one of the causes of the Hussite Wars.[2] Charles V. sent the Archbishop of Toulouse to Cahors, where "he preached up the quarrel of the King of France so earnestly and so well that the city turned to the French side, while in England the Bishop of London made several long and excellent sermons in which he demonstrated that the King of France (Charles V.) had most unjustly renewed the war".[3] In 1381 the zeal of the rebel peasants was stimulated by an eloquent discourse which John Ball delivered at Blackheath from the text—

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Where was then the gentleman?

Jacopo de Bussolari, an Augustinian Canon,

[1] *Itinerary through Wales*, Everyman, 76.
[2] *History of Bohemia*, "Lutzow", Everyman, 102.
[3] *Froissart*, Everyman, 117.

showed that the clergy sometimes practised what they preached. The Visconti were besieging his birthplace Pavia, and the city seemed bound to capitulate. But Bussolari roused the failing spirits of the Pavesans by his eloquent sermons. "He preached the reform of morals, faith, liberty and courage: he at the same time animated them by his example."[1] On May 27, 1356, he came down from the pulpit at the close of his sermon, took command of the army and drove away the besieging force.

In the Middle Ages, as to-day, preachers were not always acceptable. When the friar Hugh de Digne appeared before the cardinals at Rome to answer for his heterodox opinions he defended himself in a sermon in which "he rated the cardinals like asses". Eustace, Abbot of Vlaie, preached so well in England that he made the English clergy jealous. "It is not lawful", they said, "for thee to put a sickle into other men's corn." He answered, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few", and went back to Normandy.

Few of the parish priests and friars were well educated, and for these weaker brethren manuals of sermons were published. They contained simple expositions of doctrine with many examples from sacred and profane history to point the moral. Such collections were known as "Sleepwells", because they enabled the clergy to sleep comfortably on Saturday nights with the knowledge that the Sunday sermon was safely prepared.[2] Sleep-wells.

[1] *Italian Republics*, Everyman, 144. [2] *Mediaeval England*, 423.

Excommunication

A sinner who persistently refused to acknowledge the authority of the Church was liable to Excommunication. The ceremony of Excommunication involved the separation of the excommunicated person from the society of the faithful, from divine service and the sacraments. It doomed the sinner to seclusion from his fellows, for any who associated with him incurred the same penalty, and, unless annulled, ensured his eternal damnation, for without the sacraments salvation was impossible. But if the sinner repented, made due atonement and lived a good life, the sentence could be revoked. Excommunication was "medicinal" as well as coercive.

Burial of the Excommunicated.

The body of an excommunicated person could not be buried in consecrated ground. After the death of the Emperor Henry IV. at Liège in 1106 his body was buried in the Church of St. Lambert amid the lamentation of the poor, who kept watch round the tomb offering prayers for his soul. But the faithful Bishop Osbert of Liège was obliged to remove the body from his church, and it was taken to unconsecrated ground on an island in the Moselle. Later, with the authority of the Emperor Henry V., it was taken to the Cathedral of Speyer, which the late Emperor had lavishly endowed. But the Bishop of Speyer compelled all who had attended the funeral procession to do penance, refused to allow the body to be buried in the consecrated vault where Henry's ancestors reposed, and ordered it to lie

in an unconsecrated chapel. Five years elapsed before Henry's body was allowed to rest in his family vault.[1]

The body of Geoffrey de Mandeville,[2] who thoroughly deserved his sentence of excommunication, remained unburied for twenty years. The privilege of burial was granted only when his son had made atonement for his father's sins. Popular belief held that the bodies of excommunicated persons were incapable of corruption; we hope, for the comfort of his friends, that this belief was justified in de Mandeville's case. When Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, visited Godstow Nunnery in 1192 he saw in front of the altar a beautiful tomb draped in silk and with lamps burning around it. On learning that it was the tomb of Fair Rosamund, the mistress of Henry II., he ordered her body to be buried outside the church as a warning to other women to avoid her sin. When Agnes Sorel, the mistress of Charles VII. of France, died at the Castle of Loches the clergy refused to allow her body to be buried in the castle church, and *la belle des belles* was buried in a mortuary chapel at the foot of one of the towers, where her beautiful memorial still delights the visitor. The inscription says that she was "a sweet and simple dove, whiter than the swans, rosier than a flame, her face having the radiance of flowers in spring".

Excommunication might involve serious civil disabilities. A law of St. Louis provided that a magistrate might, without legal process, attach the estate or person of an excommunicated

[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, iv. 226. [2] Page 37.

person. The faithful were exempted from all services they owed to a feudal superior who had been excommunicated.

Reasons for Excommunication.

In the early days of the Christian Church excommunication was pronounced on sinners guilty of murder, fraud or immorality, on those who adopted heretical views or relapsed into idolatry. In the Middle Ages the Popes used this power to coerce sinners of high degree who were not amenable to other methods. Alfonso, King of Leon, was compelled by the Church to repudiate his first wife, Teresa of Portugal, on the ground of consanguinity, but he contracted a second marriage within the prohibited degrees with Berengaria of Castile. He was excommunicated by Innocent III. Raymond VI., Count of Toulouse, was excommunicated, because Peter of Castelnau, the Papal Legate sent to oppose the Albigensian heresy, had been murdered at St. Gilles on January 15, 1208, by one of the count's servants. Bérenger, the rapacious Archbishop of Narbonne, "whose god is money", was excommunicated because, although he had been archbishop for ten years, he had never visited his province. Excommunication was pronounced upon heretics whose opinions challenged those which were proclaimed as official. Peter Abélard, the lover of Héloïse, had been condemned in 1140 by the Council of Sens for denying the doctrine of the Trinity. In the same year Pope Innocent II. ordered Abélard to cease from teaching and excommunicated his followers. Two of Wycliffe's followers were excommunicated at St. Paul's by Archbishop Courtenay in 1382.

Excommunication was pronounced or threatened for less serious offences. In 1435 the Bishop of Strasburg said that he would excommunicate any head of a nunnery who was found dancing in a tavern.[1] Although the power was nominally restricted to the higher clergy, parish priests sometimes exercised it. In a manual published for their instruction[2] they are bidden to pronounce sentence, "with cross, candle and tolling of the bell", twice or thrice a year on those who create disturbance during service or steal the property of the church, on "such as lend out cattle in the hope of getting a higher price at pay day than loan day", on men who use false weights or clip the king's money, and on eavesdroppers such as "stand or listen by night under walls, doors or windows for to spy touching evil". Excommunication was also to be pronounced[3] on usurers, witches and charmers, and those that defiled sanctuary.

Excommunication a Temporal Weapon.

Excommunication was not long confined to spiritual offences. The Popes found it a most powerful weapon against those who challenged their temporal power, and particularly against the Holy Roman Emperors, whose long struggle with the Papacy formed one of the greatest questions of the Middle Ages. Henry IV. was excommunicated by Pope Gregory VII. in 1072 and 1080, and by Pope Pascal II. in 1103. Henry V. was excommunicated at the Council of Vienne in 1112 and in 1119 by Pope Calixtus II., who, as Archbishop Guido, had pronounced the sentence

[1] *The Mediaeval Church*, Coulton, 399.
[2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 21.
[3] *Ibid.* 23.

at Vienne. The case of Frederick II. seemed distinctly unjust. Owing to strong pressure from Pope Gregory IX. and after a long delay, due to the great difficulties of maintaining and embarking a large armament, he had sailed from Italy on a Crusade. Three days later he returned owing to serious illness, and on September 29, 1227, was excommunicated for returning. During his stay in Italy he inflicted due punishment on some of his rebellious subjects, who were favourably disposed to the Pope, and he was again excommunicated on March 23, 1228. The Pope ordered him not to set sail until by full submission he had effected a reconciliation with the Church, but he went to the Holy Land, and by skilful negotiation secured for Christian pilgrims the privilege of worshipping at the Holy Places, a privilege which recent Crusaders had failed to win by force of arms. He returned to Europe in May 1229 to protect his dominions against the Pope and his supporters, and found that the Pope had again excommunicated him at Perugia.

Excommunication was employed by the Popes as a powerful weapon in the wars in which they were often engaged. Pope Leo IX., who in his younger days had served as an officer in one of the military expeditions of the Emperor Conrad, not only excommunicated the Normans, who were establishing their position in Southern Italy, but led the papal troops in person. But spiritual eminence does not necessarily imply military ability. The Norman knights were so skilful that it was said that they could cleave an enemy from the head to the saddle in one blow ; and the

Pope was utterly routed in the Battle of Civitella in 1053. The victors threw themselves at his feet and begged for pardon. He annulled the sentence he had recently passed and gained for the Holy See the strong support of those who had proved such valiant and gallant opponents. Boniface VIII., in 1297, excommunicated the powerful family of the Colonnas; the Cardinal of Porto, the leader of the papal army, stormed their castles, and the Colonnas fled from the vengeance of the Pope. Bernabo Visconti was a monster of cruelty and wickedness; he had "burned priests and monks in iron cages; beheaded or tortured others to death and boxed the ears of a pious Franciscan with a red-hot iron". He might have continued in these courses had he not also driven from the city of Bologna the Pope's famous general Cardinal Albornoz, and therefore he was excommunicated by Urban V. at Avignon in 1362.

Excommunication gradually lost its power. In some cases, notably in those of Henry IV. and Frederick II., it seemed to have become an instrument of personal vindictiveness rather than of moral correction. Grave moral offences, which obviously demanded the sternest punishment, often passed unpunished. Raymond VI. of Toulouse had three wives living at the same time; he was not excommunicated until he became involved in the murder of Peter de Castelnau. King John of England suffered no spiritual punishment for repudiating his first wife, Hadwisa of Gloucester, and carrying off Isabella of Angoulême, who was betrothed to the Count de la

Excommunication lost its power.

Marche. He was excommunicated in 1209 for refusing to accept Stephen Langton, the Pope's nominee, as Archbishop of Canterbury. Excommunication became common and familiarity bred contempt. In France in the fourteenth century three or four hundred excommunicated people were found in some of the smaller towns.[1] In one district in Normandy ten per cent of the householders were excommunicated.[2] Men could not believe that failure to pay tithes, or eavesdropping, justified such a sentence. The extension of the punishment to animals and birds made it ridiculous. The famous jackdaw was excommunicated, not at Rheims but at Corbey. The climax of absurdity was reached when, in order to save the crops, caterpillars were solemnly excommunicated with bell, book, and candle.

Effect of Excommunication.

The effect of excommunication varied greatly. A strong king might defy it, a weak king was often compelled to submit. Fear of spiritual condemnation had great influence over some; hardened sinners treated excommunication with contempt. Henry IV.'s position in Germany was seriously weakened by the excommunication of 1073 and the fierce struggle with Gregory VII. that followed. Four years after the sentence was published the king humbly sought reconciliation with the Pope and had to wait outside the gates of the Castle of Canossa for three days, standing barefoot in the snow and clad only in a thin linen garment, before the haughty Pope deigned to receive him. But the excommunication of 1080

[1] *St. Francis to Dante*, Coulton, 396.
[2] *Five Centuries of Religion*, Coulton, 76.

proved of little effect. Henry's army, court and council remained faithful. Five years later Henry captured Rome, and Gregory VII. died an exile from the Holy City.

John was so powerful that the papal legates did not dare to publish the sentence in England. The publication was made in France, and letters from France brought the news to England. But every English baron attended the Christmas Court in 1209, and in the years that followed the excommunicated king gained remarkable military successes in Ireland and Wales. Matteo Visconti of Milan was so terrified, because he thought that his excommunication by the Pope would ruin his chances of salvation, that he abdicated in favour of his son Galeazzo and died a few weeks later in June 1322.[1] But Matteo's grandson, Bernabo, was made of sterner stuff; when the Pope sent a bull of excommunication to him he forced the unfortunate legate who brought it to eat the document and its leaden seal. Humbler folk in time showed an equal contempt for excommunication. The city of Milan was excommunicated three times and resisted the third sentence for twenty-two years. Frankfort-on-Oder defined the Pope's anathema from 1326 to 1364. Individuals feared fines more than excommunication. "If a man is smitten with excommunication," said Cardinal Hugues de St. Cher, "he grieveth not, but if he be smitten with a fine, then is he smitten in his hinder parts." [2]

[1] *Italian Republics*, "Sismondi", Everyman, 120.
[2] *Five Centuries of Religion*, 333.

Interdict

Excommunication was pronounced against an individual or a particular party. But the Church possessed also the power of issuing Interdicts which, though provoked by the faults of individuals, were directed against society at large. An Interdict excluded the whole body of the faithful living in a district or country from participation in holy things. Public worship was forbidden. The Baptism of infants and the administration of the Last Sacraments to the dying were allowed, but no Mass was celebrated, no service was held at weddings. As long as the Interdict lasted churches were closed, and any who tried to enter were driven away; crucifixes were shrouded in black cloth; relics withdrawn from public view and the tombs of saints, such as that of St. Augustine at Canterbury, draped in black. Church festivals were discontinued, and the clergy were forbidden to make processions through the streets. The dead were buried without ceremony in unconsecrated ground, but many bodies lay unburied; and in 1196 Richard I. complained to the Pope that owing to the Interdict in Normandy "the bodies of the dead lay unburied in the street and poisoned the living".[1]

An Interdict might be relaxed at Easter, Whitsuntide and the Feasts of the Assumption and Corpus Christi. The Dominicans received special permission to celebrate Mass during an

[1] Matthew Paris.

Interdict provided that they did so in a low voice and without the sound of bells.[1]

Effect of Interdicts.

The men of the times believed implicitly in the existence of a personal devil; a lively fear of Hell inspired their minds. An Interdict gave to the Devil an opportunity of which he would take full advantage, and the failure of means of grace intensified the danger of eternal damnation. In spite of the grave faults of conduct which marked the Middle Ages, people generally were devoted to the Church, which affected men's lives in many ways. Interdicts caused among the people deep sorrow at the loss of spiritual privileges and abject terror because of the wrath to come, but powerful kings sometimes defied them. In 1170 Becket's threat to put England under an Interdict unless the king ceased from his opposition to the Church, caused even Henry II. to waver in the bold policy he had adopted. Pope Hadrian IV. put the city of Rome under an Interdict in 1155 because a cardinal had been wounded in the streets, and the people, conspicuous above all other mobs for their turbulence, made atonement to the Pope, and, at his command, abolished the republic they had recently established. The Roman Catholic Church did not recognise divorce, and Philip I. of France had incurred its condemnation by divorcing his own wife and marrying Bertrada of Montfort, who had been divorced from her first husband, Fulk Rechin, Count of Anjou. Pope Urban II. excommunicated the king and queen and placed an Interdict upon any place in which

[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, vi. 22.

they lived. But the First Crusade took up so much of the Pope's attention that he failed to compel Philip to repudiate Bertrada, and the king was never fully absolved from excommunication.

Philip Augustus married Ingeburga of Denmark in 1194, but owing either to hatred of her person, or to suspicion as to her moral character, or, as some suggested, to witchcraft, he took so deep a dislike to her that he refused to live with her as her husband. A genealogy, compiled for the occasion, showed that the king and queen were too closely related, and the marriage was dissolved by a complacent council of French clergy. Soon afterwards Philip Augustus married the beautiful Agnes of Meran, whom he dearly loved. He refused to give her up and to take back Ingeburga, in spite of the strong protests of Innocent III. The Pope, therefore, placed France under an Interdict, and the whole nation suffered for the king's sin. On the death of Agnes of Meran, in 1201, Philip Augustus recognised Ingeburga as his wife. He was reconciled with the Pope, and the Interdict was removed.

"The Great Interdict", which Innocent III. imposed upon England in March 1208, because John persistently refused to recognise Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, lasted until 1213, when John submitted to the Pope. But his submission was due not to contrition for his former attitude, but to the fact that the Pope had offered England to Philip Augustus, and John feared that further opposition would cost him his crown.

CHAPTER V

PARADISE, HELL, PURGATORY AND HEAVEN

To Milton, Heaven and Hell were mental states.

> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.[1]

In the Middle Ages the conception of Paradise and Hell was essentially physical. They were definite places on or below the earth; they contained rivers, plains and mountains; the "elements" of earth, air, fire and water of which the world was composed, formed their constituent parts. The pleasures of Heaven and the pains of Hell were largely due to physical causes. The tortures of the lost and the joys of the redeemed arose partly from the discomfort or comfort of the body.

Hell was the awful place where the damned suffered eternal punishment. In Purgatory sinners remained until they had purged their guilt by suffering torture, or until their own good works or the penance, prayers, fasting and Masses of the living secured their earlier release. In Purgatory men spent a longer or shorter time "according to our merits and goodness, for

[1] *Paradise Lost*, i. 253.

although we have been set free from punishment we are not yet worthy to ascend to the supreme happiness of the Saints ".[1]

Paradise

The Position of Paradise.

" The fame of Paradise ", says Higden, " has remained unquestioned for six thousand years and more ", but for obvious reasons its exact site could not be easily determined. Sir John Mandeville, speaking with unusual candour,[2] confesses, " Of Paradise I cannot speak properly, for I was not there ". But " wise men " told him that the Earthly Paradise is the highest place of the earth; it nearly touches the circle of the moon. From a well in the highest part spring four rivers—the Pison, or Ganges, running through India, and containing precious stones and gold; the Gyson, or Nile, running through Egypt; the Tigris running through Assyria and Armenia; the Euphrates, running through Media, Armenia and Persia.

Higden[3] refutes the view that Paradise is separate from the Earth and elevated into the circle of the moon, " for the element of fire occupies all the middle place between the circle of the air and the moon ", in this place nothing can live, and in it the rivers of Paradise could not find a source. He does not agree that Paradise is situated in the " Fortunate Isles in the Western Sea ", although the soil is so rich and the climate so healthy that corn and fruit

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 146.
[2] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 276.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 73.

flourish exceedingly and trees grow to a height of a hundred and forty feet.[1] He decides that Paradise is "in the extreme parts of the East". Its situation is high, for Noah's flood did not reach it. It is not less in size than India or Egypt and must be of vast extent, for of its four great rivers the Nile is said to rise near Atlas Mountain in Ethiopia, while the Tigris and Euphrates spring from the high hills of Armenia at the foot of the Caucasus.[2] Joinville[3] says that Egyptian fishermen throw their nets into the Nile in the evening, and in the morning find them full of cinnamon, ginger, rhubarb and cloves, which are said to come from the Earthly Paradise. But fishermen's stories can hardly be accepted as historical evidence.

Access to Paradise.

Access to Paradise is difficult. Owing to Adam's sin it was walled off with fire, and on the wall stand angels to prevent any from entering.[4] According to Sir John Mandeville Paradise was surrounded by deserts infested with wild beasts, by huge rocks that prevent any advance, by rivers so rough and swift that no ships could row or sail on them. "Many great lords have assayed to pass by those rivers towards Paradise . . . but many died for weariness of rowing against the strong waves; and many of them became blind, and many deaf, for the noise of the water; and some perished and were lost in the waves; so that no mortal man may approach to that place without special grace of

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 321.
[2] *Ibid.* 66-78.
[3] *Chronicles of the Crusades*, Bohn, 401.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 77.

God ".[1] After death men had to cross barefoot a rough country full of thorns and furze before they could reach Paradise. If during their lifetime they had given a pair of shoes to a poor man, an old man would meet them with a similar present, which would enable them to walk to Paradise in comfort.[2]

Vision of Paradise.

The glory of Paradise was sometimes revealed to the faithful in visions. A monk of Evesham, who had such a vision, saw an exceedingly high wall of crystal surrounding Paradise ; in the wall stood a gate and in the middle of the gate was a cross. Conducted by St. Nicholas he passed through the gate and was dazzled by the brilliant light that illuminated the holy place. Tiers of steps rose from the ground to the top of the wall, and on the highest tier sat Christ on a " throne of joy ". The monk then ascended to the highest Heaven, where he saw God in all his Majesty. When the vision ended the monk found himself lying before the altar in church. For two days he remained unconscious and so lost to all earthly things that he did not feel the needles the brethren thrust into his body.[3] According to an Italian legend of the fourteenth century three monks entered the Earthly Paradise. An angel who guarded the door let them in, and Enoch and Elijah acted as their guides.[4] The visitors remained for what seemed to them only eight days, but when they returned to their convent

[1] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 277.
[2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 92.
[3] *The Middle Ages*, Coulton, 47.
[4] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 464.

they found that seven hundred years had passed away.

The good in the Earthly Paradise were fed with celestial food, which came down from Heaven once a day in a fiery flame. Separate rays descended on the heads of the whole company and entered their bodies. As the ray entered the body of Owen the Knight,[1] who had been permitted to visit the Earthly Paradise during his lifetime, he fell into such ecstasy that he could not tell if he was dead or alive.[2] The Food of Paradise.

All accounts agree as to the beauty and sweetness of Paradise. The climate is perfect, nothing dies, and "Enoch and Elijah live there incorrupt".[3] The monk of Evesham heard a ringing of bells "of marvellous sweetness". The Italians heard the sweet songs of angels and birds, and in the rivers fishes sang more sweetly "than man's tongue can tell". They saw a tree of glory "whose leaves were of gold", and a spring which gave eternal life to those who drank of it; the mountains were covered with trees and flowers, which were beautiful to see and smell. Owen the Knight found himself in a vast and beautiful place lighted by the splendour of the midday sun, and wondered at the love and the abounding joy of the inhabitants.[4] The Beauty of Paradise.

Hell

Hell was supposed to be situated in the middle of the earth. "The thickness of the earth is six The Position of Hell.

[1] Page 105.
[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 146.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 75.
[4] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 145.

thousand four hundred and ninety-one miles. So if Hell is in the middle of the Earth we may know how many miles it is to Hell."[1] Volcanoes were the entrances to Hell, and the body of Theodoric, the great king of the Ostrogoths, was seen by a hermit as it seethed in the crater of Mount Etna, "the cauldron of Vulcan". The entrance to Hell is often represented pictorially by the gaping mouth of a dragon,[2] which belches forth fire and smoke.

In the utter darkness of Hell and Purgatory demons, whose eyes glared fiercely and whose mouths and nostrils poured forth foul breath, tore the flesh of sinners with red-hot pincers, pierced their bodies with glowing iron nails and beat them unmercifully with pikes and scourges. They thrust them into hot ovens, cauldrons of boiling oil or ice-cold rivers. Serpents, dragons, adders, ferrets, loathsome toads and noisome worms preyed upon them. They were broken on revolving wheels and tortured by gnawing hunger and parching thirst. In Dante's *Inferno* sorcerers and diviners are represented with their heads turned backwards, alchemists and quacks are doomed to leprosy, traitors and those who showed ingratitude for kindness are put into a well of ice.

Two most interesting relics of the Middle Ages admirably illustrate the ideas of the time as to the punishment of departed sinners. The picture of "The Ladder of Salvation of the Human Soul and the Road to Heaven"[3] was painted in tempera in Chaldon Church about 1200.

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 47. [2] Page 99. [3] Page 93.

THE LADDER OF SALVATION OF THE HUMAN SOUL, AND THE ROAD TO HEAVEN

Chaldon Church, Surrey

Copyright W. Watson, York

HELL'S CAULDRON

York Minster

A band of cloud separates Heaven from Hell. In right-hand lower corner is the Tree of Knowledge with the Serpent. Next comes a Bridge of Spikes on which are cheating tradesmen, a milkman with tithe of milk, woolworkers, a mason and a smith. Below, a usurer with moneybags around him is tortured over flames. In the centre of the picture is a ladder; some climbing souls fail and are carried off by a demon, others reach Paradise: at the top is Christ. A dog gnaws a woman's hand for feeding her pets rather than the poor. Next comes a drunken pilgrim with a bottle. Demons boil murderers in a huge cauldron. A dog-like demon bites the feet of lewd dancers. Above, St. Michael weighs souls. An angel leads the three Marys, another carries the penitent thief to Paradise and a third helps Enoch and Elijah to mount the ladder. Christ "harrows Hell", trampling on Satan bound and rescuing souls from Purgatory.

The carved stone representing Hell's Cauldron[1] is preserved in York Minster. Above the cauldron, which is heated by tongues of flame which lick its sides, are a group of unfortunate souls tortured by devils and loathsome reptiles. They include (top, left) a well-dressed lady, who represents Luxury, and two figures round whose necks heavy purses are hung, representing Avarice. Below, two devils support the cauldron, and two others hold a suffering creature in the flames. The grotesque shapes on the right-hand edge of the carving are in-

[1] Page 95.

tended to show three mouths of, or entrances to, Hell. The topmost face is the right way up, the middle one sideways, and the lowest one upside-down.

Dante adds to the horror of Hell by introducing into his *Inferno* some of the most terrible creatures of classical mythology. The Minotaur roars at the approach of the condemned ; [1] Cerberus devours the souls of gourmands [2]—Harpies, those of the incontinent [3]—Pluto, many who have come into his awful Kingdom. Dis, who is the Satan of the Inferno, is imprisoned in the centre of the earth, where he perpetually devours three arch-traitors—Judas, who betrayed Christ; Brutus and Cassius, who helped to murder Caesar.

The punishment of Hell was everlasting : those who entered abandoned hope. With the exception of Trajan, who gave his own son to a widow whose son he had accidentally slain, and who was delivered from Hell for this great act of charity by the intercession of St. Gregory,[4] no sinner ever escaped except those whom Christ delivered at the Harrowing of Hell. Among these was Adam, who by long ages of torture had expiated the crime that

> Brought death into the world and all our woe.

But the Harrowing of Hell will never be repeated. "Christ harrowed Hell and brought out His friends, but will do so no more." [5]

[1] v. 4-11. [2] vi. 13-18. [3] xiii. 115-116.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 6.
[5] *A Moral Ode*, E.E.T.S., xlix. 64. See also Dante, *Hell*, canto iv.

THE MOUTH OF HELL

Douce Manuscript 374 Bodleian Library

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TORTURES OF THE CONDEMNED

Lincoln Cathedral

Copyright B. C. Clayton, Ross-on-Wye

ROASTING A SOUL

Worcester Cathedral

An old pamphlet, *Who go to Hell*,[1] includes among the sinners who are doomed to eternal punishment all backbiters, robbers, murderers, "lechers and whormongers", false merchants, brewers and bakers who defraud their customers, all wives of priests, proud young men "that love Molly" and maidens that "love Jack" and talk in church of illicit love. Another pamphlet, *Sinners, Beware*,[2] adds to the number covetous monks, soldiers who have killed fellow-Christians, false pleaders, husbandmen who stint their tithes, and those who refuse to confess their sins to a priest. The lost "shall yell so loud that the quick and also the dead shall hear (them) every one". Interesting details are given of some of the sinners who are suffering the tortures of Hell. Eutherius, Bishop of Orleans, saw Charles Martel tortured in body and soul in Hell because he had despoiled the Church and given its property to laymen. Soon afterwards the Abbot of St. Denys went to the tomb of Charles; when it was opened a dragon flew out and the body could not be seen.[3] Pope Benedict VIII. was seen by a bishop sitting on a black horse in Hell and grievously tormented. He told the bishop to ask his successor, Pope John XX., to distribute among the poor the hidden treasure which he had gained by avarice.[4]

Who go to Hell.

The Eleven Pains of Hell[5] gives details of the special punishment which particular classes of sinners have to endure. The souls of those who

The Eleven Pains of Hell.

[1] E.E.T.S. xlix. 98.
[2] *Ibid.* 72-83.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 192.
[4] *Ibid.* vii. 92.
[5] E.E.T.S. xlix. 148-154.

would never go to church are hanging on burning trees thicker than bees in their hives. Legislators who made bad laws are impaled and broken on a wheel of steel with a thousand spokes covered with spikes. There is in Hell a boiling-hot lake full of venomous serpents. In it backbiters stand up to their knees, fornicators up to their necks, adulterers and those that spoke wickedly in church up to their mouths, and those who betrayed kinsfolk up to their eyes. A thousand hungry and thirsty souls who disobeyed the command of the Church burn in fire by night and day and are plunged into a stream mixed with blood. Unchaste women who destroyed their children and gave them to hounds and swine are basted with pitch in a dark pen full of stinking brimstone; adders suck their breasts, snakes close up their eyes, hounds gnaw their feet. This passage would have rejoiced the heart of the Knight de la Tour Landry. He regrets that[1] in England, France and the Netherlands women are not stoned and burned for adultery. But he comforts himself with the thought that these "shall be rewarded with the burning flames of the fire of Hell". The worst sinners are those who condemned Christ to death; these are pierced with awls by ten thousand devils in a boiling pool in the lowest depths of Hell. For them no saint dares to intercede.

> Though they cry evermore,
> It does not help them worth a sloe.

The gruesome tale does not exhaust the subject.

[1] *Knight de la Tour Landry*, E.E.T.S., 162.

" Even if a hundred men with teeth and tongues of steel had sat talking from the death of Cain until now they would have left untold a thousand pains."

Purgatory

In Purgatory the souls of sinners were purged of guilt by torture, so that when due atonement had been made they might pass into Paradise. Torture in Purgatory was corrective, in Hell vindictive.

The Meaux Chronicle[1] tells how St. Patrick, an abbot who lived about 850,[2] was anxious to convert the " beastly minds " of the Irish. Neither preaching nor miracles had any effect and he saw that they would be converted only if someone actually saw " the torments of the wicked and the joys of the blessed ". Christ appeared to the Saint one night and showed him a deep dark ditch; anyone who after penance entered the ditch and remained there a day and a night would see all the torments of the damned and the joys of the blessed. A Knight named Owen made the attempt and gained a full knowledge of the horrors of Purgatory. The attempt involved him in great peril. Demons seized him and threw him on a great burning funeral pile, threatened to lash him with heavy scourges, to throw him into a furnace of sulphur, to pierce him with red-hot spits, to thrust him into a bitterly cold river of ice, to hurl him from a

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 139-146. See also *Wendover*, R.S., ii. 257-271, and *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 375.

[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 75.

narrow, slippery bridge into the river of Hell. He suffered much, but finally escaped from all dangers by calling on the name of Christ at the critical moment. He was led by the demons through a broad valley, where he heard "wretched shouting, howling and lamentations as if of the common people of the whole earth". He was dragged to a boundless plain filled with men and women of all ages who were lying naked, fixed with glowing iron nails to the earth, and moaning, "Spare, spare; pity, pity". Demons rushed among them and beat them with whips. In another and greater plain, many lay on their backs, nailed to the earth, and dragons, serpents and fiery toads thrust glowing needles into their bodies, which they devoured. Some hung by hot chains fastened to one of their members, others were tortured in red-hot frying-pans, pierced with spits or roasted before the fire. In a house which was "smoking horribly", human beings were steeped in pits full of molten metal. Naked men and women were thrown up into the air from another fiery pit, "like sparks of fire", and fell back into the flames. All this was terrible enough, but the demons said: "Why do you stand here? This is not Hell, but we will lead you into Hell." But he escaped from their hands and passed through a gate adorned with precious stones into the Terrestrial Paradise.

Bede[1] gives an account of a Northumbrian "who led a religious life" and returned after death to tell the story of his experience. He had passed through Purgatory, which was a vast

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, Everyman's Library, xii.

valley filled with dreadful flames on the left, and with violent hail and cold snow on the right. When the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the biting cold; finding no rest there, they leaped back again into the middle of the unquenchable flames.[1] He saw later the mouth of Hell, a vast pit from which issued frequent globes of black flames. Towards this a gang of evil spirits dragged "the howling and lamenting souls of men". They threatened to lay hold of him with burning tongs, but one like "the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness" approached to save him, and the demons dispersed and fled. His saviour then explained that the dreadful valley of Purgatory was the temporary abode of those who after a life of sin had repented and made confession at the hour of death. They would be admitted to Heaven in the Day of Judgment, but might gain earlier admission by the prayers, alms and fasting of the living, and more especially by Masses.

Heaven

The redeemed passed from the Earthly Paradise to Heaven through a door which stood on a high mountain and shone like a golden fiery furnace.[2] But no living man could enter Heaven. Bede's Northumbrian Christian, though greatly longing, did not enter Heaven, for the guide who had led him through Purgatory and

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, Everyman's Library, 242.
[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 146.

the Earthly Paradise turned back. But he saw that Heaven was a more beautiful place even than the Earthly Paradise; its fragrance was more wonderful; its light was brighter still.[1] Owen the Knight did not get even a glimpse of Heaven.

Admission to Heaven.

All who had lived a perfect life on earth were assured of immediate admission to Heaven at death. Some whose lives had been so good that they escaped the tortures of Purgatory passed into the Earthly Paradise, whence, when they had merited promotion, they were admitted to Heaven. But most of the redeemed had to be purged in Purgatory and to wait in the Earthly Paradise before they entered Heaven.

The Hierarchy of Angels.

While through the mercy of God all the redeemed might enter Heaven, all would not be of equal merit. Grosseteste said that there were different grades of dignity in Heaven, and there was general belief in the Hierarchy of Angels. First came the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones; these approached nearest to God and partook most fully of the Divine Nature. Powers, Dominations and Virtues came next in order; Principalities, Archangels and Angels formed the third group. Archangels and Angels approximated more closely to man than the higher orders. They had human forms, they winged their way from Heaven to Earth to bear the messages of God to man; they carried wands, spears, axes or measuring cords.[2] Certain Angels enjoyed peculiar distinction in Heaven: Virgins, Doctors and

[1] Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Everyman's Library, 244.

[2] *History of Latin Christianity*, ix. 60-63.

Martyrs wore special haloes or crowns; the crowns of Virgins were white, of Doctors green, of Martyrs red. Fra Salimbene rejoiced that Pope Innocent IV. had made him a Papal Preacher with rank as a Doctor, for the appointment would give him the right to wear a green halo in Heaven.

Some monks and friars believed that they were sure to go to Heaven. A Cistercian monk had a vision of Heaven and was distressed to see no members of his order among the blessed. He asked the Virgin Mary where they were and she assured him that she loved Cistercians so much that she kept them safely under her robe. The Franciscans boasted that in Heaven they would find a sure place in the wound which the spear had made in Our Lord's side as He hung on the Cross.[1]

In Heaven the Angels made sweet music, and the minstrel gallery in Exeter Cathedral[2] is adorned with a carving of the Angelic Choir. The members are represented as playing upon a viol, harp, bagpipes, trumpet, organ, cymbals and a recorder. The last instrument is unpleasantly suggestive of a saxophone.

Heaven is a place of rest and eternal life.[3] But the pleasures of Heaven are not merely physical. The blessed will enjoy full knowledge of truth and complete understanding of all things.[4] Their happiness will be mixed with envy, although their joy will be increased by the sight of the tortures

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 266.
[2] Page xvi.
[3] E.E.T.S. xlix.: *A Moral Ode*, 70.
[4] *Life of Grosseteste*, R.S., 39.

of the damned.[1] Above all, they will feel love to God without measure and will sing of the mercy of God for ever.

How the redeemed see God.

The problem as to how the redeemed would see God gravely exercised the theologians of the time. About 1320 Pope John XXII. declared that the redeemed would not see God face to face until the Day of Judgment, and the Church was divided by the great controversy that arose as to the Beatific Vision of God. If the Pope's pronouncement was correct, neither the Apostles nor the Blessed Virgin had ever seen God, and the saints did not possess the power of mediation with which they were generally credited. The views of the Pope were regarded as heretical and, although he recanted his opinion on his death-bed, his heterodoxy seriously impaired the influence of the Papacy. Otto of Freising,[2] while certain that only the pure in heart will see God, cannot decide if He will be seen with the human eye. Some said that as the eye of flesh must perish in the grave, only the eye of faith would behold God. Others held that after the resurrection of the body the eyes would be endowed with superhuman qualities and would therefore be able to enjoy the direct vision of God.

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 333. [2] Pertz, iii. 414.

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ANGEL PLAYING ORGAN

Gloucester Cathedral

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ANGEL PLAYING REBECK

Gloucester Cathedral

CHAPTER VI

THE DEVIL AND HIS SERVANTS

The men of the Middle Ages believed implicitly in the existence of a personal Devil, "the tempter of the human race",[1] who, with the help of demons continually incited man to sin. Early saints, engaged in a great struggle against heathenism, identified demons with Jove, Mercury or Venus; when Germany was converted the Teutonic gods became demons. Satan himself was Lucifer, the son of the morning, who had been cast down from Heaven because he opposed the power of God. St. Bernard asserted that angels fly with two wings, one of love and one of intellect. Lucifer fell from Heaven because he relied solely on the wing of intellect.

Appearance of the Devil.

The mediaeval conception of the Devil and his servants entirely lacks the grandeur with which Milton invests Satan.[2] The form which the Devil assumed provoked contempt or repulsion. "The devil has horns on his head and knees, he yawns with his mouth and stares with his eyes; red light gleams from his nostrils and fire flashes

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 9.
[2] *Latin Christianity*, ix. 67.

from every eyebrow ".[1] He had a tail, his feet were cloven, the smell of his body was utterly offensive. St. Bartholomew showed to the people of India a big Ethiopian, whose face was blacker than soot, his beard and hair grew down to his feet, his eyes were like glowing iron. Sparks sprang forth from his mouth, and evil-smelling smoke came out of his nostrils. He had feathers like a broom of thorns, and his hands were bound together with glowing chains. The saint cried out in a loud voice, " That was the Devil ".[2]

The Devil was sometimes represented, as in the Apocalypse, as a red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, wearing seven crowns upon his head. In the earliest mediaeval art the Devil was generally represented in the form of a serpent, but later he was often portrayed as a satyr with hairy skin, cloven foot and a tail. In his Crucifixion Massaccio paints the Devil with bats' wings in contrast with the wings of the Angels. In some of Giotto's pictures he appears as a goat. He was a prominent figure in the pictures which adorned the walls of churches. At Ludlow[3] devils are seen tormenting a dishonest alewife; in Westminster Abbey the Devil may be seen seizing a monk whose ill-gotten gains are falling out of his pocket.[4] Devils' heads form the end of the gargoyles at Notre Dame; the Lincoln Imp may still be seen perched above the choir, and the less-known Ely Imp occupies a similar position.

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 153.
[2] E.E.T.S. xlix. 183.
[3] Page 121.
[4] *The Devil*, Wall, 7.

Copyright DEVIL Alfred J. Loughton

Beverley Minster

DEVILS FROM "LE LIVRE DE LA VIGNE NOSTRE SEIGNEUR"

MS. Douce 134, f. 98, Bodleian Library

God allowed Devils to exercise their evil purposes but their power was limited. "Devils do nothing except by demission of God, they neither create nature, nor change the body or soul of those things which are created by Almighty God. But they appear to change things to the sight just as things are changed in dreams; so men of Arcadia changed into wolves and the companions of Ulysses into birds[1] by the spells of Circe." The humblest Christian could always defend himself against the temptations of the Devil by invoking the aid of God. Limitations of the Devil's power.

Although the fear of the Devil struck terror into the hearts of men, he was often represented as an object of contempt. Many of the temptations with which he assailed men were mere trickery; he was often outwitted by the simplest devices; he was treated with scorn and put to ignominious flight by valiant saints like Dunstan[2] and Martin.

The Work of the Devil

All sin was the result of the temptation of the Devil, but he took special delight in tempting clergymen, in hampering their work and subjecting them to petty annoyances. When Gerard of Modena went to Celle to induce Brother Elias to return to the Franciscan order he heard demons fluttering like bats about the convent buildings. The sound of their voices made him tremble with fear. "All his bones were affrighted, and the hair of his flesh stood up. Wherefore, when morning was come, he took his leave and Temptation of Clergymen.

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., ii. 427. Homer says that Circe changed the companions of Ulysses into swine, not birds. [2] Page 143.

departed in all haste with his companions."[1] In 1161, Henry, Count Palatine, "by the prompting of a demon" was led to leave his wife, renounce his property and to profess the monastic life in Gorzia. A few days later the demon departed. Henry threw aside the monastic habit "in which he had changed from an Angel of Satan into an Angel of light", and received back his wife and possessions. But soon he slew his wife with his own hand, and having thus given public proof of demoniac possession which he had long concealed he was sent to the Monastery of Epternach and there died worn out with penance.[2]

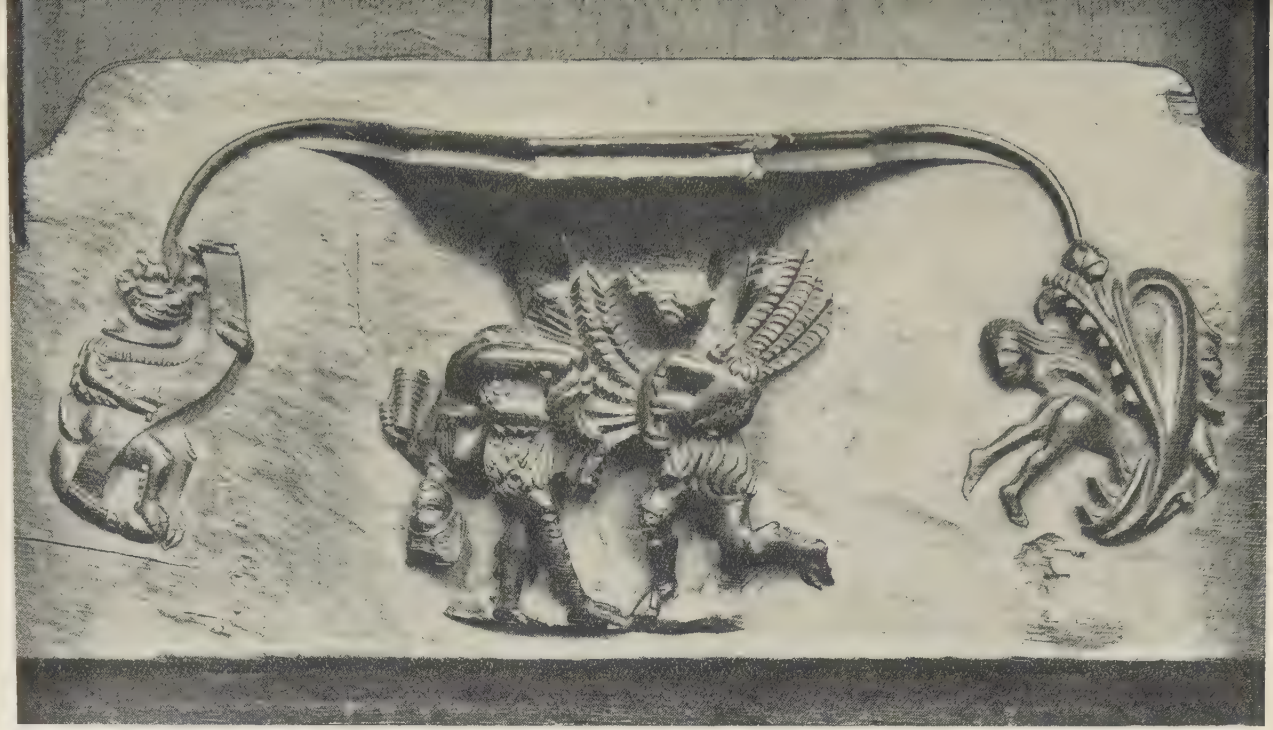
Interference with Church Services.

The Devil interfered with church services by provoking the congregation to talk, by making the clergy conduct the service in a careless and slovenly manner, by diverting men's thoughts from holy things and sending them to sleep. A well-known story[3] tells how the Devil employed one of his servants to collect the syllables that careless monks slurred over in the Mass and to put them in a sack which he took to his master. If he failed to bring each day "a thousand pokes full of failings and negligences and syllables and words" he was soundly beaten. He filled up the corners of his sacks with the vain talk of those who gossiped in church, and the high notes of the tenors who pitched the tune too high for the congregation to sing. The Knight de la Tour Landry tells of demons who were seen in

[1] *St Francis to Dante*, 89.

[2] *Lamberti Annales*, Pertz, ii. 38.

[3] *Knight de la Tour Landry*, E.E.T.S., 40. *Mediaeval People*, 69.



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THE PUNISHMENT OF A DISHONEST ALEWIFE

B. C. Clayton,
Ross-on-Wye

The alewife is being carried off to Hell. She hangs, head downwards, from the shoulder of the devil on the left and carries in her left hand the untrue measures she has used to cheat her customers

Ludlow Church

A Holy Queen and an Angel torment Two Devils in the Stocks

Tams, Cambridge

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

church leaping on the heads, horns [1] and rich attire of the congregation, and writing down the conversation that went on during service. The Devil was said to have diverted the attention of a hungry friar from the service he was attending by offering him a cake, and monks who disliked the coarse black bread that their convent supplied were tempted to dream that they were feasting on flesh. On one occasion the Devil interfered with the consecration of a church by taking the form of swine and running between the legs of the congregation.[2] But in one case at least the Devil was used as a means of enforcing monastic discipline; novices were strictly forbidden to leave their nunneries and were assured that, if they did, the Devil would seize them.

The Devil and the dying.

The Devil made special efforts to gain the souls of men in the hour of death, but was often frustrated by the intervention of saints or angels. When Charlemagne died, a monk saw a great army of demons flying from Spain to Germany to secure the soul of the great Emperor. An old French legend tells of a monk who had written, in beautiful writing, three-quarters of the Bible. He was a great sinner and the Devil claimed his soul. But his good angel persuaded the Devil to allow every letter he had written to redeem one sin and the monk escaped the pains of Hell by a single letter. Bede [3] tells of a man who on his death-bed was visited by two beautiful youths

[1] *I.e.* high head-dresses of the women.
[2] *The Middle Ages*, 207.
[3] *Ecclesiastical History*, 247.

who showed him a small book containing the record of all his good actions. Then appeared an army of evil spirits who brought a book of prodigious size and insupportable weight, in which was written in black characters a record of all the crimes he had committed in deed or thought. The demons established their claim, they pierced him with the forks they bore and carried him off to Hell. A monk of Rouen going to visit his concubine by night fell from a bridge into a river and was drowned. Angels and demons contended for his soul and referred the decision to Duke Richard of Normandy. The Duke decided that the soul should be restored to the body and placed on the bridge from which the monk had fallen into the water. If then he proceeded to his sin he should be condemned, but if not he should be saved. The monk fled to a church, where the Duke found his clothes the next day.[1]

The offspring of Demons.

Demons were supposed to unite with men or women and Giraldus Cambrensis shows that this opinion was strongly held in Wales. He tells[2] of a spirit in the form of a red-haired young man named Simon who became the steward of an estate and managed the affairs of his master with discretion and success. But suspicion arose and on being questioned he confessed that he was the son of a demon and the wife of a rustic living in Pembrokeshire. Merlin was said to have been born of a demon at Caermarthen.[3] Matthew Paris[4] tells how a young Welsh child, the son of a demon father, had, within six months

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 449.
[2] *Itinerary*, Everyman, 89.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 419.
[4] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., iii. 61.

Devils try to Interfere with the Course of Justice

Douce Manuscript 374 Bodleian Library

of his birth, got all his teeth and grown to the stature of a youth of sixteen. According to a well-known legend of the Loire Valley, a Count of Anjou had married a beautiful lady of unknown origin. She strongly disliked entering a church and would never wait while the Host was being consecrated. One day she was forcibly prevented from leaving the church before the consecration. She floated away through a window, taking her two children with her, and was seen no more. Men said that she was an evil spirit, and many years later Richard I., a descendant of the Count, declared of his family, "from the Devil we came, to the Devil we shall go". If we accept the story of his mysterious ancestress we can believe the first part of his statement; our knowledge of the characters of the early Plantagenet Kings of England suggests that Richard had correctly indicated their ultimate destination.

The Devil and Society.

Social conditions were sometimes ascribed to the influence of the Devil. He inspired extravagant fashions, and led women to wear the horn, or high conical head-dress, which was fiercely denounced by the clergy as a source of pride. In the time of Henry IV. men wore gowns with long sleeves which sometimes touched the ground and often extended as far as the knees. "These", said Higden, "might well be called the receiving places of the Devil, for men hid in them whatever they might get." [1] The clergy strongly opposed dancing as the invention of the Devil, although some allowed it as a family

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 514.

amusement and at weddings. Dancing and dress were two of the special temptations with which the Devil assailed nuns.

The Devil and Archaeology.

The Devil was used to explain problems that puzzled mediaeval archaeologists. Stonehenge was the work of the Devil.[1] He had found the stones in the garden of an old woman in Ireland, and agreed to buy them for as much money as the owner could pick up while he was carrying them away. He brought the least valuable coins he could get and threw them on the ground. The old woman started to pick them up, but the Devil put his tail round the stones and carried them off before more than a very few coins had been taken. He took the stones to Salisbury Plain and erected them there, thinking that no one had seen his action. But a friar who happened to be near threatened to tell what he had seen. The Devil turned upon him in wrath, he fled, and the Devil hurled a great stone at him, which struck him on the heel. A stone lying outside the circle is known as the "Friar's Heel" to this day. The great monoliths which still stand at Boroughbridge in Yorkshire were known as the Devil's Arrows, and some ancient stones at Stanton Harcourt in Berkshire were said to have been thrown there by the Devil when playing quoits with a beggar.[2]

The Devil and his servants were sometimes credited with supernatural knowledge. The Devil once sat in one of the higher windows of St. Peter's while the canons were celebrating

[1] See Hoare's *History of Wiltshire.*
[2] *History of Berkshire*, Lamborn, 33.

High Mass, and told them that Charles the Bald, Pepin, Lothair and Lewis were fighting a battle in a certain plain. They noted the day and hour and found later that the Devil's story was true.[1] He appeared to a citizen of Maine and said that he had procured the captivity of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, "through my servant the Duke of Austria".[2] Dunstan was warned, "through a demon that came dancing and sporting before him and making great mirth", that grave danger threatened King Edmund. He hurried to warn the King, but arrived only to find that his master had been slain by Leof, a robber.[3] King Lewis the Pious (son of Charlemagne) made laws to enforce the payment of tithes because demons had declared that a recent famine was due to the failure of the people to pay the tithes they owed.[4]

The Devil punishing Sin.

Occasionally the Devil punished people for committing sins. Euphrosine, the daughter of a nobleman of Luxemburg, eloped with her lover a few days before her marriage to the suitor who had gained her father's consent. She rode away on her lover's saddle, and, with a dagger he had given her, killed her father, who had pursued her and whom she did not recognise in the darkness. As she was crossing a river she looked into her lover's face and, to her horror, found that she was looking at the Devil. "Slayer of your father", he hissed, and the boat immediately sank.

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 54.
[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 277.
[3] *Reis de Brittanie*, R.S., 69. [4] Gibbon, v. 406.

The Knight de la Tour Landry[1] tells of a great lady who took so long to dress that she kept the congregation waiting for Mass. The Devil appeared to her in her looking-glass—she kept no more folks waiting! One Arnulf of Belesme seized the pig of a certain nun, killed it and had it for supper. That night a demon strangled him in his sleep.[2] Even in modern times demons disturb the sleep of those who have supped on pork.

Disguise of the Devil

Although the devils could not actually create any natural form, they could "transfigurate similitudes"[3] and assume various forms for their evil purposes.

St. Hilarion retired into a desert when he was sixteen years old, and there devils tempted him in many different shapes. "Sometimes they lowed at him like oxen, sometimes they lay with him like naked women, sometimes they appeared to him like howling wolves and sometimes like barking foxes." But he overcame all this by the power of Christ.[4] The Devil once appeared to St. Martin of Tours in the shape of Christ and wearing splendid attire. But the Saint was not deceived; "Where are the marks of the nails, where the hole made by the spear, where the crown of thorns?" The Devil fled, utterly discomfited. He appeared

[1] E.E.T.S. 45.
[2] Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, ii. 184.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., ii. 211.
[4] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 193.

to a monk in the form of the Virgin Mary.[1] He tempted St. Dunstan in the form of a beautiful maiden.

The Devil and Animals.

Many old legends tell how the Devil made use of animals for his evil ends. Men said that Pope Alexander VI. was so infamous that he could not have died a natural death; they believed that the Devil had appeared as a baboon and carried away his soul. In the shape of a black dog, the only mourner, he attended the funeral. The people of the Loire Valley asserted that the Château of Chambord was haunted by the Devil, who rode on a black dog and scoured the woods with a troop of demons dressed in black. Any who met him fell dead on the spot. Perhaps this story refers to Thibaut the Trickster, Count of Blois, who in old times ravaged the country so cruelly that not even a dog was left to bark. Simeon of Durham[2] says that devils were seen riding on goats in the Farne Islands. They were short of stature and of very foul countenance; they wore long beards and carried lances in their arms like soldiers. St. Dominic drove out a devil from a noble matron; it appeared in the form of a great black cat, which ran up the bell rope and disappeared.[3]

St. Dominic once saw a devil in the shape of a sparrow; Edmund Rich, the saintly Archbishop of Canterbury, heard devils cawing like rooks. One unfortunate man felt a devil going like an owl into his mouth. "It sat down upon my heart and embraced it with its cursed arms on

[1] *Mediaeval Garner*, 300. [2] R.S. 314.
[3] *History of Latin Christianity*, vi. 14.

every side." [1] This particular devil is still at work, although it no longer looks like an owl. St. Margaret of Antioch was tempted by the Devil, who had taken the form of a dragon.

Many legends tell how the Devil was seen in the shape of a serpent. Bede says that he took the form of a serpent with a woman's head, and so easily deceived Eve, "because like are attracted to like".[2] The Knight de la Tour Landry [3] declares that the Devil in the shape of a toad was found holding the heart of a woman who persistently refused to forgive her neighbour. The water of a well at Canterbury which had been blessed by Eustace, Abbot of Vlaie, proved efficacious against devils. A woman affected with an evil spirit drank of the water and vomited two black toads. These soon afterwards turned into dogs and these into great asses, which mounted into the air and polluted it with their scent.[4] The Lollards were believed to have received the Devil in the form of a fly.[5]

The Devil and Herbs.

The Church warned men that devils could insinuate themselves into herbs and that those who picked such herbs were immediately possessed by evil spirits. The faithful were enjoined to say long prayers and to make the sign of the Cross when they gathered herbs, and patients who took herbs as medicine were bidden to sing the sixteenth Psalm as a protection against any devils who might be lurking in the draught.

[1] *The Middle Ages*, Coulton, 45. [2] *The Devil*, Wall, 67.
[3] E.E.T.S. 131. [4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 182.
[5] *History of Henry VI.*, R.S., lvii.

The Influence of the Devil on Famous Men

The men of the Middle Ages were wont to ascribe to the Devil the plans of political opponents, the death of notorious sinners, and any knowledge of science, particularly of mathematics. The Devil was an ever-present explanation of the success of men of whom the critic was jealous, and the pleasant assurance of the final perdition of those whom they envied mitigated the jealousy of less fortunate contemporaries.

Gerbert. Gerbert, who became Pope Sylvester II. and died in 1003, was one of the greatest scientists of the times. He was a skilled mathematician and was reputed to have introduced the Arabic numeration into Europe.[1] He was said to have made an organ that went by steam,[2] "which the wind breaketh up by violence of hot water". Such successes could be achieved only by diabolic inspiration. He had wished to travel as quickly as possible from Spain to France and undertook to serve the Devil if he would carry him safely to his destination. The Devil rewarded his faithful servant not only by giving him a knowledge of mathematics but by revealing to him a great treasure of gold long hidden in the earth.[3] Although the Pope's personal conduct was exemplary, men could not forgive him for his mathematics, and the orator who pronounced his funeral sermon declared that "he paid homage to the Devil and came to a bad end".

[1] Hallam, *Middle Ages*, 522. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 19.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 19. The full story is well worth reading.

Roger Bacon.

Men thought that the Devil instigated and aided the researches of Roger Bacon, the greatest scientist of the Middle Ages. He discovered the principles of the refraction of light, practically invented gunpowder and found out the causes of the tides. He turned on his critics, "because things are above your shallow understandings you immediately declare them works of the Devil". But he failed to prove his orthodoxy and was imprisoned for his knowledge of things which, it was felt, no orthodox Christian should know.[1]

Other leading Men.

Many of the leading men of the times were supposed to be directly inspired by the Devil and some were reputed to possess a familiar spirit to whose assistance they owed their success. Gaston Phoebus, Count of Foix, one of the most accomplished men of the time, a distinguished musician, writer and poet, was said to have a familiar spirit who taught him alchemy and thus gave him untold wealth.[2] Archbishop Malger, the uncle of William the Conqueror, possessed "a devil of his own" who obeyed all his commands.[3] The French, not unprejudiced critics, asserted that Pope Boniface VIII. carried in the ring he wore on his finger a special devil who advised him in all things. Boniface VIII. came to a most unhappy end. He was seized by his enemies at Anagni, set on a vicious horse with his face to the tail and so led to prison. He was rescued and returned to Rome, where he was again imprisoned.

[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, ix. 158.
[2] *A Rambler in Provence*, Methuen, 272.
[3] Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, iii. 94.

"In an access of fury, either from poison or wounded pride, he sat gnawing the top of his staff, and at length either beat out his own brains against the wall or smothered himself (a strange notion!) with his own pillows."[1] He obviously was unfortunate in his adviser. Pope Benedict IX. was said to hold secret intercourse with the Devil in a wood.[2] William Rufus had despoiled English abbeys of their gold and silver and Matthew Paris[3] has no doubt that he was "inspired by the spirit of the Devil or won over by wicked men". Arnold of Brescia was the enemy of the Roman Church; he tried to deliver Rome from the authority of the Church and to make it a free municipality dependent only on the Emperor. St. Bernard declared that Arnold "neither eats nor drinks, nor sleeps nor hungers but in the Devil's company".[4]

Popular risings and even ecclesiastical assemblies were sometimes ascribed to the direct intervention of the Devil. A herald who watched the peasants in the famous rising of 1381 saw several devils among them. The Council of Basle was strongly opposed by Pope Eugenius IV., who called it a "Synagogue of Satan" and declared that "at Basle all the devils in the world had assembled to consummate the work of iniquity".[5] In 1074 a great riot took place in Cologne because the Archbishop had seized a merchant's ship. The Archbishop fled in terror to the

Popular Risings.

[1] Milman.
[2] *Mediaeval Italy*, Stubbs, 146.
[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 13.
[4] *Italian Republics*, Sismondi, Everyman, 212.
[5] *History of Latin Christianity*, viii. 354.

Cathedral, which was attacked by an infuriated mob. Several people saw the Devil, "the instigator of strife", leading the people. He wore helmet and breastplate and carried a gleaming sword. He blew a military trumpet, urged the laggards to greater efforts and was in the act of breaking the bolts of the church door, when he suddenly disappeared.[1] Liutprand says that Prince Henry was led to rise against his father, the Emperor Otto I., by the instigation of the Devil.[2] In 1076 Pope Gregory VII. had excommunicated Quintius, the prefect of Rome, for oppressing the Church. Inspired by the Devil the prefect rushed with an armed force into St. Peter's, where the Pope, clad in his pontifical robes, was celebrating Mass at the High Altar. He dragged the Pope out of the Cathedral by the hair and imprisoned him in a fortified house, from which he was soon rescued by his friends.[3]

Political and religious rivals often enjoyed the comforting assurance of their opponents' ultimate damnation. The Lombards described Eccelin de Romano, the son-in-law of the Emperor Frederic II. and the cruellest tyrant of the time, as "that man of the Devil whom even demons fear". King John of England had been strenuously opposed by Hubert Fitz-Walter and Geoffrey Fitz-Peter; when Geoffrey Fitz-Peter died in 1213, John said, "Let him salute Hubert Fitz-Walter in Hell, whither he is going".[4] Richard (I.)

[1] *Lamberti Annales*, Pertz, ii. 151.
[2] *Antapodosis*, Pertz, iv. 114.
[3] *Lamberti Annales*, Pertz, ii. 278.
[4] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 145.

rebelled against his father, Henry II. In a battle at Le Mans, William the Marshal, one of Henry's most faithful servants, levelled his spear at Richard. "God's feet! Marshal, slay me not! I have no hauberk." "Slay you! No. I leave that to the Devil," answered the Marshal, and contented himself with slaying the Prince's horse. Aeneas Sylvius, afterward Pope Pius II., had a long theological discussion with the Bishop of the Taborites, the representative of the heretical Hussites. They came to no agreement but parted in courtesy, although each was firmly convinced that the other was doomed to eternal punishment.

The Devil Defeated

The sign of the Cross.

The work of the Devil was always frustrated if the help of God was sought; the sign of the Cross put evil spirits to speedy flight, and saints proved too strong for Satan. Martin of Tours had an exceptionally keen eye for the Devil and had no difficulty in recognising him whether he appeared in his own body or assumed some other form. Saint Michael was an inveterate enemy and was feared by the Devil above all other saints. The demons of the Farne Islands [1] fled whenever a Cross was drawn on the sands. A certain monk was seized by two demons in the shape of dogs as he was leaving his church after Matins. He escaped into the church and at the sign of the Cross his assailants fled to their place of punishment, crying, "Alas! alas! we have been con-

[1] Page 133.

quered by a monk when we hoped to conquer him ".[1] One Atto, a servant of the Emperor Otto I., promised to serve the Devil if he would give him great possessions. The Emperor gave Atto wide domains in return for the help he had rendered Adelaide Queen of Italy in time of danger, and the Devil demanded that Atto should fulfil his bargain and give up his soul. Atto refused, made the sign of the Cross and the Devil promptly vanished.[2] An old legend tells how a wizard, Malagigi, went to Mountulcanus, the mouth of Hell, to recover the famous steed Bayard, which the Devil had stolen. He secured Bayard and fled. The Devil pursued and hurled a thunderbolt at the fugitive. But Malagigi held up his crucifix, the thunderbolt missed its mark and the fugitive got safely away.[3]

Saints and the Devil.

The lives of the saints were spent largely in contests with the Devil and in these the help of God gave victory to the saint. Sometimes the saint intervened to protect the people from the cruelty of Satan or his servants. St. Godehard drove out from a tainted well a demon " who ofttimes affrighted men, women and maidens by catching them up with him into the air ". Owing to the intervention of the Saint the well became so pure that the local brewers used it to make excellent beer, and, in acknowledgment of Godehard's services, they gave to his monastery a hundred measures of Michaelmas malt.[4]

A contest with a saint sometimes involved the

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 76. [2] *Ibid.* 68.
[3] *Myths and Legends of the Middle Ages*, Guerber, 200.
[4] *Chaucer and his Times*, 105.

Devil in much physical discomfort. He took the form of a beautiful maiden and went to tempt St. Juliana in the prison into which she had been flung. Juliana seized her visitor by the throat, thrashed him unmercifully, tied a rope round his neck, and dragged him forth into court, when she next appeared for trial.[1] St. Guthlac, the founder of Croyland Abbey, shut up in a boiling pot an unfortunate spirit that tried to tempt him to sin.[2]

St. Dunstan was a skilful goldsmith. He was busy making a chalice in his cell, when the Devil appeared.[3] St. Dunstan seized the Devil by the nose with a pair of hot tongs and held him so fast that his loud lamentations aroused all the neighbours.[4] Cowper's epithet, "fearful saints", could not be applied to all the holy men and women of the Middle Ages.

The Rites of the Church.

The rites of the Church, if faithfully administered, proved effective means of opposing the Devil. Attendance at Mass enabled men and women to resist temptation, if the worshipper made full use of the opportunity. The rite of Baptism expelled any devils who might be lurking in the body of the child and they fled away through the north door of the church, which was known as the "Devil's Door" in consequence. The Monastery of Novalitia had been destroyed by the pagans whose ravages brought death and destruction to Western Europe in the early Middle Ages, and the ruined buildings were occupied by demons. In course

[1] *The Devil*, Wall, 78.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 169.
[3] Page 143.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 55.

of time the monastery was rebuilt and reconsecrated. A servant of the house, as he lay awake one night heard a great multitude of demons lamenting: "Alas! alas! we have lost the place we have so long occupied; that which we once possessed we hold no more." The pious chronicler adds: "We see without any doubt that those were demons".[1] The cellarer of a monastery in the Archbishopric of Trèves found one morning that the spigot of a cask had been opened during the night and the cask had been emptied of wine. The same thing happened on the next two nights, and as a protection against evil spirits the casks were anointed on the fourth night with holy oil. Next morning "a black boy, wondrous small", was found clinging to the spigot. The Abbot had him clad in monk's dress and taught in the school of the monastery, but another Abbot strongly disapproved of this action, as it was clear that the boy was a devil.[2]

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, i. 84.
[2] *Middle Ages*, Coulton, 28.

St. Dunstan seizes the Devil by the Nose

A servant is seen blowing up the Saint's furnace

Royal MSS. 10 E, iv. f. 250

British Museum

CHAPTER VII

OF SAINTS

Saints, like Angels, were intermediaries between God and Man. But, unlike Angels, Saints had actually lived on earth. Angels were purely spiritual, but an element of humanity persisted in Saints who, after death, continued to show by miracles a lively interest in the place in which they had laboured, or been born or buried. Men felt that there existed a real communion between them and the Saints of their own locality; the worship of Saints played a very large part in mediaeval religion, and local patriotism led men sometimes to make more generous gifts and to offer more frequent prayers to Saints than to God.

Canonisation

Canonisation by the People.

Canonisation was often due to the choice of the common people; it was conferred by acclamation and not infrequently on men whose sole claim to special notice lay in the fact that they had died violent deaths. Popular canonisation led to the multiplication of local Saints and sometimes to the selection of singularly unsuitable candidates.

The ashes of Arnold of Brescia, who was burnt as a heretic in 1155, were thrown into the Tiber, "that his relics might not be worshipped by the obstinate populace".[1]

Simon de Montfort fell at the battle of Evesham in 1265, excommunicated by the Pope as a rebel against his King. In the next year Henry III. was compelled to pass a law prohibiting men from worshipping Simon as a Saint.

In spite of his notorious cruelty, immorality and treachery, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, who was executed for treason in 1322, was worshipped as a Saint by the people, who begged: "Pray for us, blessed Thomas, that we may be worthy of the promises of Christ". In 1327 Parliament demanded that he should be made a Saint.

Edward II. was murdered in Berkeley Castle in 1327; although few English Kings were less holy, his sad death caused many to venerate his memory, and Richard II. gave to the Pope a book of the miracles Edward II. was supposed to have wrought.

Canonisation was not confined to eminent people, and the power of working miracles after death was attributed to people whose lives were anything but saintly. One John, *audacissimus Christianus*, who had plundered the Jews of Stamford and fled with his spoils to Northampton, was slain by an innkeeper. Owing to certain "false signs and appearances" the people regarded John as a martyr, kept watch

[1] Tout, *The Empire and the Papacy*, 250; quoting Otto of Freising.

St. Christopher
Flemish. *Circa* 1500
Add. MS. 38126, f. 137*b*

British Museum

at his tomb and honoured it with valuable gifts. The local clergy, profiting by the gifts, supported the action of the people.[1] In 1438 Sir[2] Richard Wiche was deprived of his priesthood and burnt as a heretic on Tower Hill. Many people came to the place where he had been burnt, set up a wooden cross and worshipped him as a Saint.[3] In 1323 some rebels were hanged at Bristol; false miracles were organised on the spot to bring the King into disrepute. Fra Salimbene[4] protests against the canonisation of one Albert of Cremona, "a wine porter, loving the wine pot and living in sin", through whose intervention many miracles were said to have been wrought.

Protests against improper Canonisation.

Strong protests were made against the abuse of canonisation which, by setting up unworthy rivals, diminished the reverence paid to the great Saints of the Church. Higden asserted[5] that "neither shameful imprisonment nor a dishonoured death, since criminals suffer these; nor even generosity in almsgiving, nor apparent miracles, prove a man a saint; sanctity depends upon the holiness of his previous life". The Bishop forbade the people to worship John of Stamford as a Saint, and by command of the King and Church the Mayor and Sheriffs of London burnt the cross which had been erected to the memory of Sir Richard Wiche, and made the

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 90.

[2] A priest often received the courtesy title of "Sir" in the Middle Ages.

[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 566. [4] *St. Francis to Dante*, 307.

[5] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 342. See also *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 355.

place into a dunghill. Canonisation was originally instituted by Pope Leo III. in 800, but Bishops enjoyed the power of making Saints and Lanfranc canonised Alphege the Good, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was murdered by the Danes. But the scandal of improper canonisation had become so serious that in 1170 the right was reserved for the Pope alone; the attempt to check the evil failed, and most of the instances quoted in the text took place after that date.

Saints' Days

Saints' Days.

The number of Saints was very large and in course of time every day in the calendar became a Saint's Day. Many Saints' Days were observed as Holy Days and agricultural labour was seriously restricted in consequence. The anniversary of St. Martin of Tours was celebrated with great rejoicing and the phrase *faire St. Martin* came to denote any particularly festive occasion. The special help of the Saint was invoked for important events that happened on his day. The battle of Agincourt was fought "upon St. Crispin's Day" 1415, and Henry V. gave thanks to the Saint for the great victory he had gained. Children were often called by the name of the Saint on whose day they were born, and on whose help they confidently relied. Matrons often chose one of the Apostles as their Patron Saint. The names of the Apostles were written on tapers and placed on the altar after blessing by the priest. The woman drew one and accepted him whose name the taper bore.

Special Saints

While great Saints, like the Apostles, Martyrs, Fathers and early Bishops, were universal, some were adopted as the special protectors of different countries and towns, and of different classes and interests. St. Martin of Tours, St. Remi of Rheims and St. Denys of Paris were the Patron Saints of France and of these St. Denys held the first place. St. George, who may have come from Cappadocia and who was far more worthy of our respect than Gibbon suggests, was the Patron Saint of England. Scotland accepted St. Andrew, who was reputed to have converted the country, and Ireland St. Patrick, who delivered her from snakes. St. James of Compostella[1] sometimes appeared in person to lead the armies of Spain against the Moors. Germany had no Patron Saint, although local Saints abounded, and every kingdom and town had its own.

St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. Wilfred of York, St. John of Beverley were among the most famous of the English Saints and their power was specially reverenced in their own towns. St. John, the beloved physician, gave his name to the Order of the Hospitallers of St. John who cared for sick pilgrims in the Holy Land. Hubert, son of Bertrand, Duke of Aquitaine, was "devoted to the worship of Diana, of Venus and of Mars". As he was hunting in a forest of the Ardennes he met a stag carrying a crucifix between its horns and heard the words: "Unless

[1] Page 23.

thou comest forthwith to Christ thou shalt presently fall and perish in Hell". He turned from his evil ways, became Bishop of Liège, but is better known as the Patron Saint of huntsmen. St. Severin, the guardian of horsemen, is usually represented on horseback, and riders who returned safely from a journey hung their horseshoes on the door of his church in gratitude for the protection he had afforded.

St. Julian tried to atone for slaying his father and mother by founding, near a dangerous river, a hospital where he gave help and hospitality to travellers. One night he brought safely over the river a poor leper, made a fire to warm him, and put him in his own bed. The wanderer ascended into Heaven in a bright light and assured Julian that Christ had accepted his penance. St. Julian became the Patron Saint of travellers and *avoir l'hôtel St. Julian* meant to find a good inn and an honest host. Crispin and Crispian were the Patron Saints of shoemakers.

The Lives of Saints

The details of the mortal lives of Saints vary greatly. The early life of St. Augustine of Hippo was immoral and caused great pain to his loving mother, Monica. St. Genesius in his early days had been an emperor's jester and sung ribald songs and danced obscene dances before his master.[1] St. Cyprian had been a sorcerer, but was converted by St. Justina, whom he had vainly tried to corrupt by his magic arts.

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 181.

"Then he gave up sorcery and became a holy bishop." [1]

Some suffered from physical disability. St.

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St. Julian the Harbourer
Sforza Book of Hours

British Museum

Christopher came from a country "where men have the head of a dog and devour each other. . . . He had the head of a dog and his teeth were as

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 181.

sharp as a boar's tusk." An Angel breathed into his mouth and after that he could speak like a man. But when he came before a certain Emperor and the Emperor "saw his countenance, he was so astonished, that he fell from his royal throne".[1] Edward the Confessor occasionally gave way to fits of temper,[2] but most Saints lived their lives as loyal servants of God. St. Edmund Rich so devoted himself to goodness that he avoided evil as a matter of course and through chastity was brought nearer God.[3] St. Swithin was described as "a treasury of virtues". St. Elfleda, a royal princess, said, somewhat ponderously, that "it was not convenient[4] to the daughter of a King to attend to voluptuosity", and she lived according to her belief.[5] Many besides Aidan deserved the epitaph: "He taught no otherwise than he and his followers had lived."[6]

Childhood of Saints.

Some Saints showed their vocation at a very early age: St. Nicholas when quite a small child stood up in his bath and gave thanks to God.[7] At the age of three, Edburga, the daughter of King Edward the Elder, chose for a present a chalice and ecclesiastical vestments instead of valuable ornaments.[8] St. Anastasius when a mere child "began to baptise the other children in the waves of the sea and they submitted to him as if he were a bishop".[9] St. Symphorien

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 67.
[2] Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, ii. 23.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 216.
[4] *I.e.* suitable.
[5] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 415.
[6] *Bede*, Everyman, 110.
[7] Page 161.
[8] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 403.
[9] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 71.

Here (the) father and mother of St. Augustine
First put him to learn doctrine.

Here by St. Ambrose christened was
The great doctor Augustine through God's grace.

Here he taught grammar and rhetoric,
Among all doctors none was like him.

No word for toothache here might he say,
But wrote to the people to pray for him.

F. W. Tassell,
Carlisle

LIFE OF ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Wall Paintings in Carlisle Cathedral

Here sore weeping for his great sin,
He went to mourn a garth within.

Here weeping and wailing as he lay,
Suddenly a voice thus heard he say.

Here died his mother called Monica,
As they were returning to Africa.

F. W. Tassell,
Carlisle

Herbrand, the King of Lombardy,
Had him translated from Sardinia to Padua.

LIFE OF ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Wall Paintings in Carlisle Cathedral

received baptism when he was only three years old.[1] St. Cuthbert gave early promise of the sanctity to which he afterwards attained; in his childhood he was playing games in a field and a small boy of three reproved him: "Why do you, holy Cuthbert, priest and prelate, give yourself up to those things which are opposite to your nature and rank?"[2]

Charity, Simplicity and Humility of Saints.

Charity, sympathy and humility were shown practically by all true Saints and it is difficult to make the best selection from the countless stories which illustrate these virtues. St. Thomas Aquinas took bread from his home in his cloak to feed the poor; his father bade him open his cloak and a shower of roses fell to the ground. St. Martin of Tours cut his mantle in half and gave one portion to a beggar; later in a vision he saw Christ wearing the part he had given to the beggar. St. Oswald gave food to beggars in a silver dish and ordered the dish to be broken up and the pieces given as additional alms. "May this hand never perish", said St. Aidan, who was present. St. Nicholas of Bari secretly threw into the house of a knight sufficient gold to give marriage portions to his three daughters.

St. Catherine of Siena, who was wedded to Christ by a mystical marriage, comforted a criminal who was condemned to death and laid her head on the block beside him. After the execution she took the severed head in her hand and looked up to Heaven, where the vision of

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 151.
[2] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 289.

Christ in glory assured her of the salvation of her friend.[1]

St. Eastorwine, although an Abbot, was so

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MYSTICAL MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA
Sforza Book of Hours

British Museum

humble " that he held the plough, and hammered iron and thrashed corn and winnowed it, and milked ewes and led the calves to the cows, and

[1] *Latin Christianity*, viii. 27.

ST. NICHOLAS PRAYING IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS BIRTH

Victoria and Albert Museum

baked bread and planted leeks ".[1] St. Chad travelled about his diocese on foot until Archbishop Theodore compelled him to ride on horseback; and St. Swithin was so humble that he travelled at night to avoid the pomp and ceremony of a journey by day. St. Elizabeth of Hungary washed the bodies of lepers and, when towels ran short, took down the hangings of her room and said, "How lucky we have these to fall back upon". St. Edburga, although of royal blood, would rise at night to clean the shoes of the nuns of her convent. St. Bernard strongly protested against the murder of the Jews and asked: "Does not the Church triumph more fully over the Jews by converting than by slaying them all?"

Mortification of the Flesh

Many Saints cruelly mortified their flesh, believing that the pain of the body facilitated the salvation of the soul. Owing to excessive fasting, the hair and beard of St. Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury, dropped off. He ate only the coarsest food, took no flesh on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and during Lent, and rarely had more than one meal a day. He spent so much time in prayer that his knees were as hard as the soles of his feet.[2]

St. Bernard said that he counted no time so much wasted as when he slept. Owing to excessive fasting he had largely lost the power of

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 37.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 223.

discriminating between different kinds of food. He sometimes drank oil for wine and took blood instead of butter. He said that water was the only liquid he could taste, and he could taste water only because it made his cheeks cold.[1] St. Thomas Becket, like St. Edmund Rich, wore a hair shirt next his skin and suffered with patience the bites of the vermin which infested his body. The Lady Ethelfleda, third Abbess of Romney, was so holy that under the protection of darkness she would steal out of the Abbey and stand naked in a stream while she recited the Psalms of the day.[2]

St. Simeon Stylites[3] stood for three years on a stone pillar. A large wound broke open on one of his hips and he stood for a whole year on one foot.[4]

St. Douceline of Digne wore beneath her rich outer garments a hard shirt of pigskin; her flesh grew over it, and when it was removed by force her skin was torn away. A girdle of knotted cord was fastened so tightly round her waist that it cut into the flesh and worms bred in the cuts it had made. An iron hoop worn round her body added to her pain.[5]

Power over Animals

Some Saints were famous for the influence they exercised over animals and birds. A lion sent

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 16.
[2] *In Search of England*, Methuen, 24.
[3] *I.e.* "of the pillar".
[4] *Early English Martyrology*, 130.
[5] *Mediaeval Garner*, 320.

to devour St. Prisca crouched at her feet and refused to harm her. Men who went to seek the body of St. Edmund, the martyred King of East Anglia, found a wolf embracing his head and the animal followed them quietly as they carried away the King's body.[1] Two otters came out of the sea and lay down before St. Cuthbert; they breathed upon his feet and wiped them with their hair. The Saint blessed them and they returned to the sea. Seagulls flew low over Whitby Abbey in honour of its famous Abbess, Mother Hilda. Wild birds were wont to take their food from the hands of St. Hugh of Lincoln[2] and St. Remi,[3] and when St. Erasmus retired to a desert place "a raven brought him food and divers wild animals came and honoured him".[4]

Bodies of Saints Uncorrupted

The bodies of Saints remained uncorrupted after death. St. Cuthbert's body after eleven years was found "whole as if it had been alive, with the joints pliable, more like one asleep than a dead person". The brethren cut off some of his hair, and it cured a youth of a distemper of the eye.[5] Four hundred and eighteen years later the body was again examined and found to be free from corruption.[6] In 1102 the tomb of Edward the Confessor was opened. The body was not decayed, the limbs were flexible, and the Bishop of Rochester tried in vain to

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 343. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 182. [3] *Ibid.* v. 312.
[4] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 91.
[5] *Bede*, Everyman, 220. [6] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., 247.

pluck a hair from the King's beard as a precious relic.[1] The body of St. Etheldreda was found uncorrupted sixteen years after her death, and a wound in her neck which had been open at her burial was healed, so that nothing but the scar remained.[2] When the body of St. Stephen was discovered an exceedingly sweet smell came from the coffin.[3] St. Rosalia was buried by angels in an unknown grave, but the fragrant scent of roses revealed it to her friends.

Signs from Heaven

The death of Saints was often attended by signs from Heaven. The body of St. Anselm was anointed with holy oil sent from Heaven after his death.[4] When St. Hilda died, Bega, a nun living in the monastery of Hackness, thirteen miles away, "who was then in the dormitory of the sisters, heard in the air the sound of a bell which used to awaken and call the sisters to prayers when any one was taken out of this world, and opening her eyes, she saw, as she thought, the top of the house open and a strong light pour in from above; looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid servant of God in that same light, attended and conducted to Heaven by Angels".[5] St. Patrick's soul was escorted to Heaven by a vast host of Angels who moved in a great light. Bright rays of light reaching from their grave

[1] Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iii. 33.
[2] *Early English Martyrology*, 103.
[3] *Ibid.* 137.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 438.
[5] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 204.

to Heaven revealed the burial-place of two English priests who had suffered martyrdom in Germany.[1]

When St. Marcellinus and St. Petrus suffered martyrdom their executioner declared that he had seen their souls when they left the bodies, as if they were adorned with gems and attired in garments shining with gold, and "angels joyfully bore them to Heaven in their hands".[2] When St. Quintius was beheaded, "suddenly there flew from his body a dove as white as snow and it flew to Heaven".[3] The body of St. Catherine of Siena was carried away by angels and buried on Mount Sinai. St. Cedd came from Heaven with a crowd of angels to fetch away the soul of his brother St. Chad.[4] The bells of Lincoln Cathedral pealed forth of their own accord when Bishop Grosseteste died.[5] When St. Omer died "there was a delightful smell in the house, as if it were filled with all the precious spices";[6] the moon turned as red as blood at the execution of St. Felix.[7]

Martyrs

Roman Persecution.

Special honour was justly paid to those Saints who had been "crowned with martyrdom". Under the Roman Empire the Christians suffered greatly. The first persecution was partly due to the fact that Nero, having set Rome on fire in a fit of drunken frenzy, declared that the

[1] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 239.
[2] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 93.
[3] *Ibid.* 197.
[4] *Ibid.* 33.
[5] *Latin Christianity*, vi. 292.
[6] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 165.
[7] *Ibid.* 159.

Christians had done the deed. Under Nero some Christians were tied to stakes, covered with tar, and set on fire to illuminate the Emperor's parties; some were fastened together and left until they perished of hunger and thirst; others were wrapped up in skins of wild beasts and thrown to dogs; many were crucified. The Decian persecution lasted only from 250 to 252, but was so cruel that men said that the Emperor would more patiently endure a competitor for the purple than a bishop in the capital. Diocletian (303 to 313) forbade the celebration of Christian worship and Gibbon says[1] that about two thousand persons were martyred in his reign.

In the early Middle Ages the number of martyrs was increased; some missionaries were slain in foreign lands whither they had gone to preach Christianity; some Christian Churchmen were murdered by heathen invaders.

About 1220 five Franciscan friars went to preach to the Moors in Northern Africa; they were offered wealth, beautiful wives and honours if they would embrace Mohammedanism; they indignantly refused the offer and were at once murdered. On April 19, 1012, the Danes who had invaded Kent pelted the saintly Archbishop Alphege with stones, logs of wood and the bones and skulls of the oxen they had just eaten. Thurkill, more kindly than his comrades, offered them "gold and silver and all that I have or can possibly acquire, excepting my ship", if they would spare the Archbishop's life—but all in

[1] Volume ii. 172.

vain. "Amid the fury of their raging he gained the blessing of Heaven." [1]

How Martyrs died.

The martyrs met their deaths in many ways. Some were beheaded like St. Paul and St. Valentine, or crucified like St. Andrew, or burned like St. Polycarp, or thrown to wild beasts like St. Ignatius.

St. Lawrence is usually said to have been put to death on a red-hot gridiron. After suffering torture for some time, he said to the Emperor Decius, who was watching the execution: "Look here! thou poor one! eat this side that is roasted and turn me on the other".[2] According to another account, he was scourged with red-hot rods and St. Romanus saw an angel drying his limbs with a cloth after the operation.[3]

The Quattuor Coronati were four skilful workmen who marked their tools with the sign of the Cross and did better work than their six hundred competitors. Their jealous rivals complained that they worked by sorcery, and by the order of the Emperor they were sealed up alive in leaden chests and thrown into a river.[4]

St. Catherine was broken on a wheel. St. Sebastian was shot with arrows and "he was as full of them as a hedgehog is of bristles".[5] St. Marcellus was buried in a pit up to his waist and lingered there for three days before he died.[6] The heathen bound St. Saturnius to a fierce bull, which rushed over stony places until his head was

[1] *Norman Conquest*, i. 663.
[2] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 143.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.* 203.
[5] *Ibid.* 27.
[6] *Ibid.* 163.

crushed and his limbs broken asunder.[1] An anchor was thrown around St. Clement's neck and he was cast into the sea, which dried up for a distance of three miles.[2] St. Vitalis, a Roman soldier, was buried alive in a deep hole which men "filled from above with earth and stones until he gave up the ghost". Strangest of all was the martyrdom of St. Cassianus, for "the Emperor allowed children to kill him with their slates and pierce him with their pencils, and his martyrdom was the longer and heavier as their hands were too weak to kill him".

Difficulty of Execution.

The execution of a martyr was sometimes a task of considerable difficulty. St. Eugenia gave her executioners great trouble. She refused to renounce Christianity and was thrown into the Tiber with a stone round her neck; the stone burst and she floated safely to land. She was thrust into a burning oven; the oven suddenly cooled and she escaped unhurt. She was cast into prison and kept without food for ten days, but seemed little the worse. Finally, Christ appeared to her on Christmas Day and took her soul to Heaven.[3] St. Thecla "was thrown into a burning fire and it would not burn her; she was brought into the midst of wild beasts, of lions and of bears, and they would not hurt her; she was thrown into a pit full of sea monsters and they did not harm her; she was bound to wild bulls and they did not injure her".[4]

The heathen bade a snake-charmer bring in a big adder to bite St. Anatolia and to gnaw her

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 213.
[2] *Ibid.* 211. [3] *Ibid.* 5. [4] *Ibid.* 177.

THE GRIDIRON

Scenes from the life of St. Lawrence

W. A. Call,
Monmouth

Ludlow Church

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ST. CATHERINE AND HER WHEEL

W. A. Call,
Monmouth

Window, Mynor Chapel

bones. The Saint continued to pray, the adder refused to hurt her, and "whenever she bowed her head the adder bowed its head also".[1] The Emperor Hadrian ordered St. Eleutherius to be bound and placed in a car drawn by four wild horses so that they might run over rough paths in the desert and break all his limbs. But an angel turned the horses and they brought the car to a high mountain where many kinds of wild animals came to him. "When he lifted up his hands to Heaven, the animals lifted up their feet and worshipped God with him."[2] Molten lead was poured on St. Victor of Milan but "did not hurt him any more than cold water".[3] Diocletian ordered St. Vitus, a boy of seven, to be plunged into a cauldron filled with molten lead and boiling pitch but "this did not afflict him".[4] St. Alexander was thrust into a burning oven but the oven did him no harm. A sorcerer gave to St. Victor meat poisoned with the strongest poison but it had no effect; his gaolers gave St. Barnabas "poison to drink and yet it did not trouble him".[5] When her enemies tried to drag St. Lucy away to execution they could not move her: "Some pushed, some pulled and toiled heavily until they were tired, and yet the holy maiden stood firm. Then they fastened ropes on her hands and feet and pulled her with them but they were unable to move her a step farther."[6]

Diocletian gave St. Agape and her two sisters to an officer who entered their house at night with evil design. But by the power of God he

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 119. [2] *Ibid.* 59.
[3] *Ibid.* 79. [4] *Ibid.* 95. [5] *Ibid.* 95. [6] *Ibid.* 219.

was turned away from them ; " he embraced the kettles and kissed the pans, so that he was all black and sooty, and when he came out his men fled at the sight of so dreadful a spectre ".[1]

St. Uncumber proved well able to protect herself. She was threatened with severe punishment unless she consented to marry a man she did not love. In self-defence she grew a beard in the night and her wooer promptly withdrew his suit.

The sword or the axe generally proved effective, although the executioner failed three times to cut off St. Cecilia's head,[2] but the action of some martyrs must have greatly astonished their murderers. Directly after St. Justus was executed, his body rose from the ground and took the head in its hand ; the tongue began to speak and said : " Lord of Heaven and Earth, receive my soul, for I did no harm and I was pure in heart ".[3]

St. Lucy carried her head in a dish. Immediately after his head was struck off in Paris, St. Denys picked it up, put it under his arm and went for a walk up the Butte de Montmartre.

Punishment of those who murdered Martyrs.

Swift punishment sometimes overtook those who were responsible for the death of martyrs. When the executioners tried to shoot St. Cosmas and St. Damianus, the arrows turned in their flight and slew those who had dispatched them.[4] A flash of lightning killed those who had stoned St. Emerentiana.[5] St. Euphemia escaped without injury from the burning oven into which she

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 53.
[2] *Ibid.* 209.
[3] *Ibid.* 189.
[4] *Ibid.* 181.
[5] *Ibid.* 147.

had been thrust, but the soldiers who threw her in were consumed by the flames.[1] Fire came from Heaven and consumed the Emperor who had condemned St. George to death and all who for seven years had tortured the holy man;[2] Terentianus, who ordered St. John and St. Paul to be beheaded in a pit in his own house, was slain by an arrow from Heaven.[3] When St. Alban was beheaded, the executioner's "eyes dropped upon the ground together with the blessed martyr's head";[4] the children of the men who cut St. Winifred's throat "bark like dogs and are cured only by asking her help at her holy well".[5]

Soon after St. Matthew suffered martyrdom the house of the King who had condemned him was burnt down with all his treasures, his son went mad, he himself became a leper and was covered with sores from head to foot. In despair he committed suicide by falling upon his sword.[6] Persecutors were often driven mad by remorse for their cruelty. The King who had ordered St. Bartholomew to be flayed alive and the Archbishop who had advised him went out of their minds.[7] Egeas, who had ordered the execution of St. Andrew, was "torn by devils" and died the same day.[8] The Emperor Decius became mad, and when his wife, Tryphonia, saw how he "raved and screamed the night before he died, she believed in God and received baptism".[9] It was dangerous even to handle

[1] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T S., 171. [2] *Ibid.* 61.
[3] *Ibid.* 107. [4] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 13.
[5] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 428.
[6] *Early English Martyrology*, E.E.T.S., 175.
[7] *Ibid.* 153. [8] *Ibid.* 215. [9] *Ibid.* 189.

the relics of saints. Ten men who touched the bones of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Lawrence simply to change their position were struck dead; and when a Lombard tried to cut a golden nail from the chain of St. Peter "the awestruck knife sprang up and cut his sacrilegious throat".[1]

The Influence of Saints

The Saints exercised profound influence both during life and after death. They often appeared to protect their suppliants against spiritual or physical danger. They waged continual warfare with the Devil, the enemy of mankind, and wrought miracles to help men in time of trouble. They interceded with God on behalf of sinners; the prayers of St. Dunstan delivered the soul of King Edwin of Northumbria from Hell; Rimbert, the saintly Archbishop of Bremen, by fasting on bread and water for forty days released from torment the soul of a priest who appeared to him in a vision.[2]

The *Anthem of St. Thomas Becket*[3] gives a good idea of the reliance men placed upon their Patron Saints.

> Holy St. Thomas of the Kingdom of Heaven,
> The equal of all the Apostles,
> The Martyrs receive thee
> Joyfully in their hands.
> Thou art our help in England;
> Hear our voice.
> Thou art a comfort to mankind;
> Save us now from our sins.

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[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, ii. 153.
[2] *Adam*, Pertz, ii. 37.
[3] E.E.T.S. xlix. 90.

THE MURDER OF BECKET

Harleian MSS. 5102, fol. 32

British Museum

Departed Saints often appeared in person to avert hostile attack, to protect the faithful in battle or to encourage them in their daily work. Charlemagne led an expedition into Galicia in accordance with the order of St. James of Compostella, who bade the King drive the Moors out of the country in which his body lay.[1] After King Ramirez of Castile had been defeated by the Moors at Clavigo in 939, St. James appeared on a white horse and urged the King again to attack the Moors. The Saint's personal prowess and the inspiration of his presence inspired the Spaniards to renewed efforts, and the Moors were utterly routed with a loss of sixty thousand killed. When Pope John X. led an army in person against the Saracens of Southern Italy, St. Peter and St. Paul were seen supporting the warlike Pope by their presence and the victory he gained on the Garigliano was ascribed to their help.[2] St. Thomas Becket was thought to take a keen interest in the Crusades. Richard I., as he set out on the Third Crusade, vowed to build a chapel to St. Thomas "if he would be his leader on land and sea";[3] when the King's fleet was endangered by a terrible storm, St. Thomas Becket, St. Edmund Rich and St. Nicholas appeared, clad in ecclesiastical raiment: they said they had been sent by God to save the fleet and immediately the tempest ceased.[4] On arriving at Acre, Richard built to St. Thomas the chapel he had vowed. When the soldiers

The Saints help Christians in battle.

[1] *Life of Charlemagne*, 108.
[2] *History of Latin Christianity*, iii. 292.
[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 14. [4] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 252.

of the First Crusade were fighting the Saracens at Dorylaeum, St. George, St. Demetrius and St. Theodore came forth from the mountains on white horses, carrying white flags, and fought so valiantly that they enabled the Christians to win a great victory.[1] St. George was said to have fought for Henry V. at Agincourt "upon St. Crispin's day".[2]

Sometimes the standards of saints were carried to battle in order to inspire to greater efforts the soldiers who fought beneath them. The Battle of the Standard, in which the English routed the Scots in 1138, was so called from the standard which was set up, probably on the site of Standard Hill Farm, three miles north-west of Northallerton. It was a mast fastened to a rude wagon and on the mast were placed the banners of St. Peter of York, St. Wilfred of Ripon, St. John of Beverley and St. Cuthbert of Durham. The aged Archbishop of York was too infirm to take the field in person, but his deputy, the Bishop of Orkney, and a number of clergy in full robes took their place round the standard and offered up fervent prayers for the success of the English army.[3] St. Cuthbert proved a most zealous protector of his diocese. In 1069 William the Conqueror sent a force from York to punish the men of Durham who had slain their Norman Earl. But when the Normans reached Northallerton, St. Cuthbert "sent so great a thickness of mists that men could

[1] *Crusades*, Story of the Nations, 57.
[2] Capgrave, *De Henricis*, R.S., 117.
[3] *The Early History of the North Riding*, Edwards, 123.

hardly see those who stood by them, and they could by no means find the way ".[1] The terror-stricken soldiers retired to York; the men of Durham gave thanks to St. Cuthbert for his timely intervention. The banner of St. Cuthbert was carried by the English at the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346 and a cross of wood six feet high was erected to mark the spot where it had rested. The standard of St. Thomas Becket was raised by the venerable Archbishop Baldwin in a battle against Saladin; two hundred knights and three hundred soldiers were attached to the standard and served "in the pay of the Saint".[2] William I. determined to impose a tax on the bishopric of Durham; St. Cuthbert appeared to the tax collector as he slept, beat him soundly with his staff and sternly ordered him to depart at once from the diocese. He was carried away in a litter, being unable to walk, but when he reached the borders of the diocese his pain suddenly ceased.[3]

When Angus, King of the Scots, was fighting against the Britons, St. Andrew made good use of the opportunity. He promised the King victory over his enemies if he would give one-third of his property to God for alms and for the worship of St. Andrew. Angus accepted the terms. The Scots gained the day, the Church was greatly enriched.[4] Joan of Arc believed that St. Michael, St. Catherine and St. Margaret had appeared to her and bidden her go forth

[1] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., i. 99.
[2] *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi*, R.S., 116.
[3] *Norman Conquest*, iv. 521. [4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 391.

from Domrémy to save France. They continued to give her good advice and as long as she obeyed the heavenly voices she met with great success. But she continued to fight after she had completed her appointed task although the Saints were no longer heard, and she was defeated, captured and condemned to death. In her last hours she was again comforted by the heavenly voices and met her doom with such courage that a rude English man-at-arms exclaimed: "Heaven help us! we have burned a Saint".

Help in Daily Life.

Mediaeval records are full of accounts of Saints who appeared to help men in the tasks of their daily life. The Virgin, Mary Magdalene and St. Elizabeth were seen moving among the monks as they laboured in the cornfields of Clairvaux.[1] A vineyard which had been cursed bore no fruit; St. Bernard consecrated some water and ordered it to be sprinkled over the vineyard, which again became fertile.[2] The men of Avignon tried to build a bridge across the Rhone but the force of the current made their efforts fruitless. Bénézet, a shepherd boy, told the Bishop that Christ had sent him to build the bridge, but the Bishop bade his servants beat the boy for his effrontery. But Bénézet picked up a stone thirty feet long and seven feet broad and placed it in the river bed, saying, "Here is the foundation-stone at least". St. Bénézet's bridge still stands at Avignon, although the current has carried away one end, and the bones of the saint were long preserved in the chapel which yet

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 76. [2] *Ibid.* 62.

remains. The monks of Novalitia complained that serpents prevented them from hunting and fishing in a valley which abounded in game and fish. Abbot Elderadus gathered all the serpents into one place and bade them stay there, and the brethren entered the valley as they pleased.[1] The stock of corn at Bridlington Priory was running short, but, owing to the personal intervention of St. John, a supply which seemed sufficient for less than a month lasted for more than a year.[2] A wooden bridge over the Ouse had broken down and a great crowd of men and children fell into the river. All escaped with their lives, owing to the prayers of Archbishop William.[3]

Saints subdued Dragons.

The help of Saints proved most efficacious against the dragons in whose existence the men of the Middle Ages fervently believed. St. Martha went to the lair of the Tarasque, a fearsome dragon that harried Tarascon, held up a cross, and bade the beast come forth. It came and crouched meekly at her feet. The men of the town cut it to pieces and good King Réné in later years instituted an annual festival in which a monstrous beast was led through the streets by a little girl who represented St. Martha.[4]

When a poisonous dragon was about to slay the daughter of a King of Libya, St. George [5] suddenly appeared and overthrew it. He told the maiden to bind her girdle about its neck,

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense*, Pertz, ii. 4.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 492.
[3] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 116.
[4] *Rambles in Provence*, 174.
[5] See Frontispiece.

and the dragon followed her "like a meek beast and debonair" into the city, where it was slain.

The Gargouille was a terrible beast that lived in the marshes outside Rouen and devoured the citizens. St. Romain, acting on the principle of "first catch your dragon", asked the magistrates for two condemned criminals, whom he fastened, as bait for the Gargouille, to stakes at the edge of the marsh. When the beast appeared, St. Romain completely cowed it with the sign of the Cross. He fastened his stole round its neck and led it into the city, where it was hacked to pieces by the citizens.

Varied intervention.

Saints sometimes intervened to punish sin and sacrilege, to vindicate their own dignity, or to slay their enemies; and according to Giraldus Cambrensis,[1] Welsh and Irish Saints were more vindictive than others.

When St. Edmund Rich forgot to say the prayer to the Virgin, "O beata et intemerata", St. John appeared and threatened to beat the Saint with a palmer's staff unless he duly performed his devotions. St. Etheldreda appeared in a vision to an unjust steward and pierced him with her staff. He asked his servants, "Did you not see St. Etheldreda piercing me with the point of her staff?" and promptly died.[2] William the Conqueror did not dare to approach her shrine in Ely Cathedral, because of the wrongs he had done to her land, but humbly offered a mark of gold on her altar.[3]

[1] *Itinerary*, Everyman's Library, 122.

[2] *Novae Leges Angliae*, R.S., i. 428. [3] *Norman Conquest*, iv. 480.

King Sweyn cherished a deep hatred for St. Edmund. One day as he was marching at the head of his army towards Bury St. Edmunds he saw the Saint coming against him, spear in hand. "Help, fellow-soldiers, St. Edmund is coming to slay me!" cried the King. The Saint ran him through with his spear, and he died in horrible agony "commending his soul to the dwellers in Heaven", says one chronicler; "sent to Hell with grievous bodily pain", says another.[1] Sweyn's son Canute said that he would never believe that St. Edith, the daughter of the wanton King Edgar, could be a Saint. Whereupon the Saint rose from her grave and seemed to rush furiously upon the doubting King. Canute fell to the ground as if dead, and afterwards did penance for his foolish words.[2] St. Benedict directed the arrow with which a certain foot soldier shot at Geoffrey de Mandeville and so punished the Earl for his sacrilege in using Romsey Abbey as a fortress.[3] Toustain, a Norman knight, rode on horseback into Beverley Minster in pursuit of an Englishman who was wearing a golden bracelet. St. John took prompt vengeance. Toustain's horse fell and broke its neck, and the knight, "smitten in his own person, his arms and legs all twisted behind his back, no longer seemed a man but a monster".[4] A woman who kissed the shrine of St. Edmund tried to carry away in her mouth some gold and silver offerings which had been placed upon it. Her tongue and lips

[1] *Norman Conquest*, i. 363.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 476.
[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 274.
[4] *Norman Conquest*, iv. 291.

remained fixed to the shrine for the greater part of a day.[1]

St. Cuthbert and Women.

St. Cuthbert was one of the holiest of Saints, and was said to have passed three or four whole nights in prayer. But he showed only too clearly that he had a deep and abiding objection to women, who were strictly forbidden to approach his shrine. Judith, the wife of Earl Tostig of Northumbria, had such respect for St. Cuthbert that she wished to pray at his shrine. But, knowing the Saint's reputation, she feared to go herself and sent one of her handmaidens instead. The angry Saint gave the unfortunate girl so sound a thrashing that Judith hastily renounced her pious intention.[2] When in 1175 Bishop Puiset tried to build a Lady Chapel behind St. Cuthbert's shrine, the walls began to crack because, in his hatred of women, St. Cuthbert objected to having a Chapel of the Virgin so near to his resting-place. The Lady Chapel of Durham was therefore built outside the west wall of the Cathedral and not, as usual, at the east end. But another account ascribes the failure of the eastern chapel not to St. Cuthbert's opposition but to the malice of the Devil. St. Cuthbert's prejudice was long respected. "Up to to-day", says Simeon,[3] "no woman is allowed to enter any of the churches which Cuthbert adorned with the presence of his holy body", and this restriction extended even to the burial-grounds of the churches. A woman who, on her homeward journey, tried to take a

[1] Giraldus, *Itinerary*, 22.

[2] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., iii. 11.

[3] *Ibid.* 58.

short cut through the cemetery of Durham Cathedral, fell dead directly she placed her foot over the boundary.[1] Surely St. Cuthbert was the Patron Saint of old bachelors.

[1] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., iii. 60.

CHAPTER VIII

RELICS, SHRINES AND PILGRIMAGES

The honour which Saints received during their life was paid in no less measure to their remains. The powers of healing, of protection, of absolution from sin which the living Saint had displayed were exercised by his relics, which were regarded with profound adoration by the men of the time. When King John died, he was clad in a monk's gown and buried in Worcester Cathedral between the tombs of St. Oswald and St. Wulfstan. He hoped that such precautions would enable him to slip into Heaven. His contemporaries thought that his efforts had not achieved their end. "Foul as Hell is," said one chronicler, "it is made fouler by the presence of John."

Relics

The Value of Relics.

Relics of Saints attracted to their shrines multitudes of pilgrims whose offerings greatly enriched the church in which the shrine stood. Relics not only gave an odour of sanctity but were a real financial asset, and for both reasons were regarded as valuable possessions. In 840 the Danes burned Bremen with its churches, monastery and library. But St. Ansgarius saved the

relics of the Saints which the monastery possessed and brought them safe to Bremen, and the safety of the relics was regarded as some compensation for the loss of more worldly treasures.[1] Every effort was made to keep relics. The monks of Monte Cassino prayed that their richest possession, the body of St. Benedict, might be returned to them, and Pepin the Short ordered that the monks of Fleury, near Orléans in France, should restore it. But the latter prayed earnestly that the precious body might remain with them, and "God made the messengers blind, that they were fain to return to Italy without the body of St. Benedict".[2] Monasteries coveted their neighbours' relics and sometimes went to war to secure these precious possessions for themselves.

But churches and monasteries were not the only possessors of relics. "The reliquary was the most precious ornament in the lady's chamber, in the knight's armoury, in the King's hall of state, as well as in that of the Bishop or the Pope."[3] King Harold of England "was a diligent collector of relics in different parts of the earth".[4] King Edward I. carried about with him a perfect museum of relics. Louis XI. of France wore in his cap the leaden images of Saints, to which he offered the most fervent prayers.

Relics and Oaths.

Relics were used to make oaths more stringent, for he who broke an oath which had been taken on the relic of a Saint offered a personal insult to

[1] *Adam*, Pertz, ii. 23. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 235.
[3] *History of Latin Christianity*, ix. 84.
[4] *Norman Conquest*, ii. 665.

the Saint or to God. When Harold was in Normandy, he took an oath to recognise the claim of Duke William to the crown of England. After he had taken the oath, William opened the chest on which it had been taken, and showed that it contained some of the holiest relics of Norman Saints.[1] But men cared little for oaths and the saintly King Robert of France was so horrified at the general perjury of the age that he removed the holy relics from the reliquaries on which oaths were taken so that, if those who swore thereon broke their oaths, they might incur less guilt.[2]

Relics and Warfare.

Relics were used to ensure the success of military operations. When William of Normandy invaded England in 1066, Pope Alexander II. sent him a ring containing a hair of St. Peter and thus assured him of the Apostle's support.[3] Contrary winds prevented him from setting sail from France, so he sent for the body of St. Valery and owing to the influence of the Saint obtained a favourable breeze.[4] Apparently relics did not always prove effective engines of war. King Roger II. was besieging the city of Troia in Apulia, which had rebelled against him. The Bishop and a number of priests came out clad in white and exhibited relics of Saints, which they hoped would avert the King's wrath. But Roger hanged five of the ringleaders and burned the city.[5] Gabriel de la Bondinière, who had charge of the relics which Charles VIII. of France

[1] *Norman Conquest*, iii. 292.
[2] Hallam, *Middle Ages*, 532.
[3] *Norman Conquest*, iii. 321.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 327.
[5] *Roger of Sicily*, Heroes of the Nations, 165.

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H. W. Salmon,
Winchester

RELIQUARY

Containing relics of King Canute, Queen Emma and Bishop Aelwine

Winchester Cathedral

took with him into Italy in 1494, had the misfortune to be captured at the battle of Fornovo with the relics he carefully guarded. Relics added to the dignity of state occasions. When the Earl of Warwick landed at Rouen in 1467 he was met by magistrates "bearing before them crosses, banners, holy water bottles and the relics of several Saints attended by priests in their copes".[1]

The Purchase of Relics.

Relics therefore were of the greatest value for both this world and the next, and men eagerly embraced any opportunity of securing them. Many were bought for hard cash. Baldwin II., the Emperor of Constantinople, was so poor that he had pawned his son Philip to the Venetians as security for a debt. He gained some relief by selling the precious relics which had been accumulated at Constantinople and for which St. Louis of France was willing to pay a handsome price. Two Dominican monks were sent to Constantinople to identify the Crown of Thorns, which they found preserved in a golden vase enclosed in a silver shrine. The holy relic was received with due honour. It was met at Troyes by St. Louis and his court, and the King, barefooted and clad only in his shirt, carried it reverently through the streets of Paris. Louis gave Baldwin ten thousand marks of silver for the Crown, and the Emperor, realising that the market was good, sold to St. Louis for twenty thousand marks "the baby-linen of the Son of God; the lance, the sponge and the chain of His Passion"; a portion of the true Cross; the

[1] *Scandalous Chronicle*, ii. 343.

rod of Moses and part of the skull of St. John the Baptist.[1] To receive these relics, to which the body of Edward the Confessor was added, St. Louis built Sainte Chapelle in Paris, "a certain incomparable chapel", as Matthew Paris calls it.[2] The Abbot of Peterborough bought the body of St. Florentine, all but the head, for £500; and Egelnothus, Archbishop of Canterbury, who visited Rome in 1024, paid a hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold for an arm of St. Augustine and "sent it to Coventry for love of Earl Leofric".[3]

Relics as Spoils of War.

Relics often formed a valuable part of the spoils of war. When the Bohemians defeated the Poles in 1039 they took back to Prague as their richest spoil the body of St. Adalbert, once Bishop of Prague, who had suffered martyrdom near Gnesen.[4] Some of the nails which had fastened Our Lord to the Cross had been fixed in the form of a cross in a lance by the Emperor Constantine and the precious lance had passed into the possession of Rudolf, King of Provence. Henry the Fowler, King of Germany (919 to 936), offered Rudolf any price he liked for the lance, but Rudolf refused to give it up until Henry threatened to waste his territory with fire and sword. Rudolf then surrendered the lance, and Henry gave him in return much gold and silver and a large part of Swabia. On the death of Henry the Fowler, the lance passed to his son, the Emperor Otto I. Otto at one time was hard

[1] Gibbon, vii. 30. [2] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 447.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 115.
[4] *History of Bohemia*, Everyman's Library, 27.

pressed by his enemies ; he got off his horse and, kneeling before the sacred weapon, prayed earnestly for victory, "as Moses had prayed against the Amalekites". His prayer was answered, and he escaped from imminent danger.[1]

When Frederick Barbarossa sacked Milan in 1162, Rainald, Archbishop of Cologne, transferred to that city the bodies of the three Wise Men of the East, which had been brought from Persia to Constantinople and miraculously transported from Constantinople to Milan by Saint Gregory.[2] After the capture of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 Abbot Martin took a whole cargo of relics to Paris.[3]

Travellers seek Relics.

Travellers gladly seized every opportunity of securing relics for the churches of their native land. Adoldagus, Archbishop of Hamburg, brought back from Rome, in 962, relics of the holy martyrs and distributed them among his clergy.[4]

Any means were deemed lawful in so sacred a cause. It was not easy to secure relics, for St. Augustine had protested against the sale of limbs of martyrs, and the Theodosian Code had prohibited the violation of the tombs of martyrs and the sale of their bodies.[5] When Eginhard, the faithful servant of Charlemagne, sent a messenger to Rome to buy relics for his monastery, the Pope forbade any more to be sent. But the

[1] *Otto of Freising*, Pertz, iii. 270, and Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, Pertz, i. 117.

[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 180.

[3] Gibbon, vii. 573.

[4] *Adam*, Pertz, ii. 55.

[5] *History of Latin Christianity*, ix. 85.

messenger stole many from a crypt, and Eginhard, knowing that he was too far from Rome to fear the Pope's vengeance, duly chronicled the theft as a proof of the genuineness of the relics.[1] Baldwin, Patriarch of Constantinople, kept in his private chapel a Holy Cross cut in ancient time from the wood of Our Lord's Cross. A priest stole the cross and gave it to the monastery of Bromholm, in Norfolk, on condition that the monks made due provision for his two sons. Many miracles were wrought there, many pilgrims were attracted by the relic, and "the house of Bromholm, formerly poor and insignificant, became splendid and most famous, and a magnificent structure replaced its ruined buildings ".[2]

The Venetians stole the body of St. Mark from Alexandria and hid it in a cask of pickled pork, for they knew that no Mohammedan would touch pork. Their plan proved successful, and the body of St. Mark was long regarded as one of the most valued possessions of Venice.[3] Fra Salimbene received from the Archbishop of Ravenna the bones of the prophet Elisha ; he did not get the head, " because the Austin friars had stolen it ".

Extraordinary methods of theft were sometimes employed. When Fulk the Black,[4] whose moral lapses thoroughly justified his nickname, went as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, he contrived, while kissing the holy stone from which Our Lord ascended to heaven, to bite off a por-

[1] *Life of Charlemagne*, Heroes of the Nations, 181.
[2] *Ralph of Coggeshall*, R.S., 201-203.
[3] *Mediaeval People*, 27.
[4] Page 62.

tion, which he presented to the Abbey of Beaulieu. The monks received the precious gift with enthusiasm and kept the anniversary of the death of the donor as one of their holy days. St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, bit off a part of the bone of Mary Magdalene which was one of the greatest treasures of the Abbey of Fécamp, and brought it safely home to Lincoln. When the body of St. Cuthbert was translated from its original resting-place to the east end of Durham Cathedral the spectators were strictly forbidden to touch the relics, and the monks were ordered to keep careful watch that not a particle of the thread of the grave-clothes should be stolen.[1]

Such methods did not always prove successful. Some Greeks tried to carry away from Rome the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul. But demons, whose intervention seems to demand further explanation, roused the people: "Ye men of Rome, help! for your gods be taken away." The thieves fled and flung the remains into a pit, where they were soon found—in such confusion that it was difficult to decide which were St. Peter's bones and which St. Paul's. But God revealed that the greater bones were those of St. Peter, and these were restored to the Vatican.[2] The monks of Pontigny cut off the arm of St. Edmund Rich, whose body "God had kept undecayed". But God was angry at the theft, and the arm no longer wrought miracles.[3]

In their eagerness to secure relics men sometimes laid impious hands on the bodies of Saints

[1] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., 259. [2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 75.
[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., iii. 76.

immediately after death. When St. Elizabeth of Hungary lay dead, the people cut off her ears and portions of her breasts for relics. On the death of St. Douceline, people tore to pieces three tunics that had been thrown over the body and soldiers had great difficulty in preventing them from tearing the body to pieces also.[1]

The greatest collections of relics were found in the Holy Land; in Rome, the capital of the Roman Catholic Church; and in Venice and Constantinople, owing to their connection with the East.

Relics in the Holy Land.

Old travellers carefully recorded the relics they had seen in the Holy Land. A French Bishop Arculf went to Jerusalem in the latter part of the seventh century and saw Our Lord's silver cup, "of the capacity of a French quart", and the lance that had pierced His side.[2] Willibald, a West Saxon who visited Palestine about 725, saw in Jerusalem the bed on which our Lord's body lay; on it were fifteen golden cups filled with oil which burned continually night and day.[3] Saewulf, an Anglo-Saxon merchant, saw in the Mosque of Omar the cradle and bath of Christ and the bed of the Virgin Mary.

The most famous of the relics which the piety or imagination of pilgrims found in the Holy Land was the True Cross. According to the general story, St. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, found three crosses in a cellar, forty-two steps in depth, which she discovered

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 323.
[2] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 3.
[3] *Ibid.* 18.

under Mount Calvary. These were the crosses on which our Lord and the two thieves were crucified, but there was nothing to show which of the three was the True Cross. A dead body was laid on each cross. In two cases nothing happened; but when the corpse was placed upon the third cross, it was immediately restored to life, and thus the identity of the True Cross was established. The True Cross [1] was made from four trees: the portion from the earth to the cross-piece was made of cypress, so that its sweet smell might counteract the smell of the decaying body; the cross-piece, of palm, typified the victory of Christ; the foot of the cross was cedar-wood, which does not rot in earth or water; the tablet of the inscription was olive, the sign of peace, for the Jews expected to have peace in Jerusalem when Jesus died. The Cross was eight cubits long and the cross-piece three cubits and a half. Helena took to Constantinople the True Cross, one of the nails and other relics.

According to an old Cornish legend, the wood from which the True Cross was made grew from three apple kernels which an angel gave to Seth, bidding him, when Adam died, put one into his father's mouth and one in each of his nostrils.[2] From these sprang the Tree of Life. Moses wrought miracles with the branches of the tree; David brought some branches to Jerusalem, where they took root and became one tree, around which the King built a wall; Solomon

[1] Mandeville, *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 131.

[2] *The Creation of the World.* Translated from Cornish by Whitley Stokes. Williams and Norgate, 1864, p. 145.

ordered the tree to be cut down and the beam was carried into the Temple. The beam was afterwards buried on the site of the Pool of Bethesda, and an angel pointed it out to the sick who bathed in the Pool. The wood was afterwards used to make the True Cross.

Arculf saw in the Church of Saint Sophia "a wooden chest with a wooden lid, containing three pieces of Our Lord's Cross; that is to say, the long timber cut in two, and the transverse part of the same Holy Cross". Constantine fastened a nail to the bridle of his horse and through its influence conquered Asia Minor, Palestine and the neighbouring countries.[1] The cross of Dismas, the penitent thief, was taken to Cyprus and falsely declared by the people of the island to be the True Cross.

Relics at Rome.

The relics at Rome[2] included some of Christ and the Apostles and also many of western Saints. Aaron's rod[3] and the Tables of the Law given to Moses by God were the most interesting of the Old Testament relics. Christ's swaddling-clothes and the hay on which He lay in the stable[4] reminded the faithful of the circumstances of Our Lord's birth. A part of the loaves and fishes with which the five thousand were fed and the table used at the Last Supper recalled important events in His earthly ministry. The sponge once filled with gall and vinegar, one of the nails used in the Crucifixion, and Pilate's

[1] Mandeville, *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 12, 167.

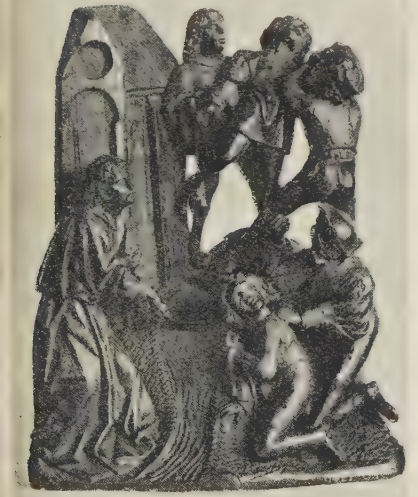
[2] A most interesting account of these is contained in the *Stacions of the Cross*, E.E.T.S.

[3] *Stacions of the Cross*, 10.

[4] *Ibid.* 16.

King David builds a wall round the Holy Tree of three stems.

Solomon orders the Tree to be cut down.



An angel points out the beam in the Pool of Bethesda and the sick are healed.

St. Helena deposits a portion of the Cross at Jerusalem.

THE LEGEND OF THE TRUE CROSS
Group in Oak. Flemish
Victoria and Albert Museum

inscription, "This is the King of the Jews", were directly connected with His Passion. A picture of Christ which He sent down from Heaven to the Virgin Mary was regarded as confirmation of the Ascension. The heads of St. Peter and St. Paul were kept in the Church of St. John Lateran, carefully guarded in a locked shrine, of which only the Pope possessed the key,[1] and the chains with which St. Peter was bound had been sent from Jerusalem to Rome by Eudoxia, the wife of the Emperor Valentinian.[2] The ashes of St. John the Baptist, the bodies of St. Philip and St. James[3] and a foot of Mary Magdalene were relics of the friends of Our Lord. The arm of St. Christopher, on which Our Lord stood when the Saint carried Him across a river; the arm, part of the brain, and the tabard of St. Thomas Becket were some of the many mediaeval relics which attracted pilgrims to Rome. When the bones of St. Stephen were brought to Rome and placed in the tomb of St. Lawrence, the latter, "who was lying on his back, rolled over on his side so that he might make room for Stephen, his contemporary".[4] But the number of relics which could be identified formed only a small proportion of the total number. Seven thousand holy bones were treasured in the Churches of Saints Simplicius, Faustina and Beatrice, and although few, if any, of these could be definitely ascribed to any Saint, their efficacy was such that they ensured the remission of seven thousand years of penance for

[1] *Stacions of the Cross*, 12.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 239.
[3] *Stacions of the Cross*, 19.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 359.

pilgrims who worshipped in the churches in which they lay.[1]

Relics at Constantinople.

Constantinople possessed many relics in addition to those which St. Helena had sent. "Here", says Higden,[2] "rest St. Andrew and James, the brother of Our Lord; Matthew and Luke, the Evangelists; the prophets Elisha, Samuel and Daniel; St. Chrysostom, whom men called John of the Golden Mouth; St. Basil and the Virgins Agatha and Lucia." Bertrandon de la Brocquière, a Burgundian knight, visited Constantinople in 1432 and was much impressed. He saw behind the Choir of St. Sophia the gridiron on which St. Lawrence was broiled, and "a large stone in the shape of a wash-stand, on which, they say, Abraham gave the angels to eat, when they were going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah". He found in the Church of St. Apostola the broken shaft of the column to which our Saviour was fastened when He was beaten with rods by order of Pilate.[3]

Relics at Venice.

Venice was full of relics, of which the body of St. Mark was by far the most valuable. In the Maison Dieu was preserved a tooth of Goliath, which weighed twelve pounds, and one of the water pots of Cana.[4] Brocquière saw in Venice the body of St. Helena, which had been brought from Constantinople, and many of the Holy Innocents whom Herod had massacred.

Relics in other places.

But relics were found all over Europe. Ralph de Diceto, Dean of St. Paul's, was a great col-

[1] *Polychronicon*, R.S., v. 14. [2] *Ibid.* i. 151.
[3] *Early Travels in Palestine*, Bohn, 338.
[4] *Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, Jusserand, 378.

lector, and he gave to St. Paul's the knife of Our Lord, some hairs of Mary Magdalene, a bone of St. Lawrence, the pallia and pastoral staffs of St. Martin of Tours and St. Maximin of Trèves, the head of St. Hippolyta, a sandal and chasuble of St. Remaclus.[1] Relics kept at St. Omer included portions of the tables of stone on which God had written the Law with His finger, a part of Abraham's rod and the tunic and hair shirt of St. Thomas Becket.[2] Bruges treasures to this day the Sacred Blood of Christ. This was said to be the blood which Joseph of Arimathea had kept when he washed the dead body of Our Lord. It was brought to Bruges in 1147 by Thierry, Count of Flanders, to whom it had been given by his brother-in-law, Baldwin, King of Jerusalem. Its miraculous power gave life to a child that had been born dead, and the cloth which covered the precious relic was said to have cured a girl of an issue of blood.[3] The Church of St. Sernin in Toulouse claimed to possess the bodies of seven of the Apostles and part of the body of Edmund the Martyr, King of England. The staff of Christ, with which St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland, was long preserved in Dublin.[4] Henry I. gave the hand of St. James to Reading Abbey.[5] King Henry III. gave some of the blood of Christ to Westminster Abbey, and an indulgence of six years and a hundred and sixteen days was granted to all who worshipped it on the appointed day.[6]

[1] *Ralph de Diceto*, R.S., i. lxx.
[2] *Middle Ages*, Coulton, 168.
[3] *Bruges and West Flanders*, 33.
[4] *Polychronicon*, R.S., i. 381.
[5] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 247.
[6] *Ibid.* ii. 29.

Criticism of Relic Worship.

The whole system of relic worship was open to the gravest suspicion. The Church vigorously denounced the sale of relics by fraudulent pilgrims who induced the credulous to buy, as relics of martyrs, bones which had been recently disinterred from a neighbouring churchyard. But the authenticity of the relics which great churches treasured as their richest possessions could not always be proved; and St. Augustine was not the only one who doubted "if they really were martyrs". The fragments of the True Cross were so numerous that they would have furnished material for many crosses. The clergy of Constantinople and of Amiens and the monks of Angers all claimed to possess the head of St. John the Baptist; two must have been mistaken, for we have no evidence that St. John, like Cerberus, was "three gentlemen at once". Sir John Mandeville was not perturbed by the rival claims: "I know not which is true; but God knows. But however men worship, the Blessed John is satisfied." The modern critic will wonder how it was that the seamless coat of Our Lord was found at Argenteuil,[1] or a part of Moses' rod at Sens,[2] even although letters of proof were found with the former relic. Joinville[3] tells a humorous story which bears on the question. King Louis IX. had ordered his faithful seneschal to buy a hundredweight of coloured camlet for distribution among the Franciscan friars. He sent a knight to give to the Queen four pieces of camlet that were wrapped in a towel. The

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 206. [2] *Middle Ages*, Coulton, 3.
[3] *Chronicles of the Crusades*, Bohn, 502.

Queen, knowing that Joinville had been to the Holy Land, assumed that he had sent her some relics and fell on her knees. The knight followed her example, but she bade him rise: "It does not become you to kneel, who are the bearer of such holy relics." The knight at once explained what "the holy relics" really were, and the Queen burst into laughter, and said, "Sir Knight, the Devil take your lord for having made me kneel to a parcel of camlet." In some cases fraud was definitely proved. Fra Salimbene [1] tells how the little toe of St. Alberto was brought as a precious relic to Parma. It smelled strongly of garlic, and on careful examination was found to be a sprig of that plant. The Boxley Holy Rood used to show by changes in its facial expression if it was pleased with the gifts that pilgrims offered. A gift of silver was received with a frown; gold "caused the jaws to wag merrily".[2] The Commissioners of Henry VIII. found that the image was worked by an ingenious system of wires. They reported that the Holy Blood of Hayles Abbey, near Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, was "no blood, but honey clarified and coloured with saffron"; [3] they declared that the milk of the Virgin, which had attracted so many pilgrims to Walsingham, was nothing but chalk and water. Many will consider that the most valuable gift that Ralph de Diceto made to St. Paul's was not relics of Saints but the manuscript of his history.

But, in spite of any criticism we may offer, the

[1] *St. Francis to Dante*, 308.

[2] *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages*, Heath, 231. [3] *Ibid.* 261.

fact remains that in the Middle Ages men did believe in the authenticity of relics and held that relics were effective as means of grace, as remedies for disease and for help in time of need. Whether that belief was justified or not is a secondary consideration.

Shrines

The power of remitting penance and of healing diseases, which Saints had displayed during their lives, was exercised after their deaths by the tombs in which they were buried and the shrines which contained their relics. Multitudes of pilgrims visited these holy places to obtain the benefits which such a visit would ensure, or to show personal devotion to an adored Saint.

The number of such places of pilgrimage was enormous; there were seventy in the city of Norwich alone.[1] The Holy Places in Jerusalem and, to a less extent, the scenes of our Lord's life in other parts of Palestine were the most famous. The sins of a pilgrim who bathed in the Jordan were immediately washed away; the shirt he wore on entering Jerusalem was carefully kept to be used as his winding-sheet, for it would ensure the immediate admission of his soul to Heaven. The pilgrim who carried palm branches as a sign that he had been to the Holy Land gained the respect of his fellow-countrymen, and the "palmer" might be reasonably sure of a kindly welcome from high and low. But the cost of the journey to Palestine

[1] *Chaucer and his Times*, Coulton, 140.

limited the number of palmers; most pilgrims had to be content with visiting a shrine in their own country or, at any rate, in Europe.[1]

Famous Shrines.

The shrine [2] was originally the chest in which the relics were enclosed, but the term was applied also to the tomb or chapel in which the reliquary

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A Shrine

A monk is seen inserting the relic of a Saint

Window, York Minster

was placed. Sometimes openings, technically termed *foramina*, were made in the shrine so that worshippers might touch the enclosed relics with

[1] For a list of the chief shrines, see the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, xii. 85.

[2] L. *scrinium*, a chest.

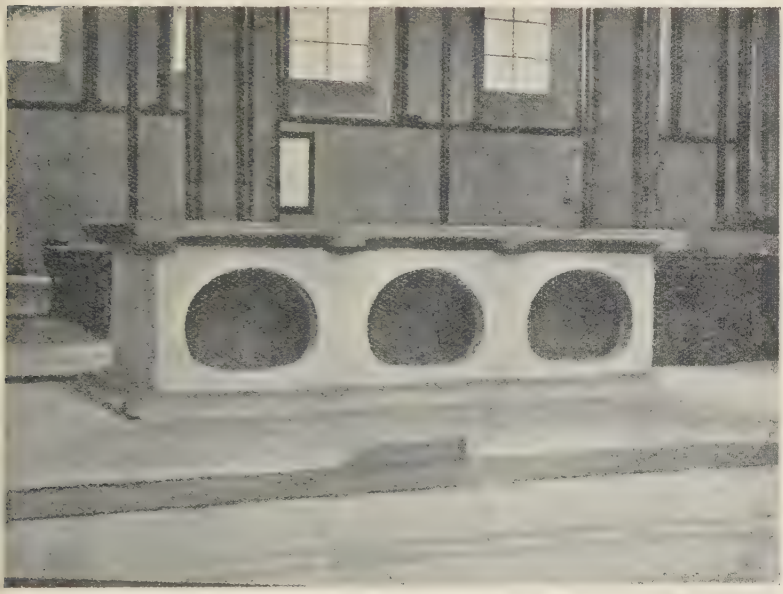
their hands, kiss them with their lips, or place upon them handkerchiefs which were afterwards carried to the sick in the hope that they might convey healing. The shrines of St. Osmund at Salisbury, St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury and St. Canonica at Whitchurch in the county of Dorset provide excellent examples of *foramina*.

The tombs of the Apostles at Rome were the most famous of European shrines, but those of St. James at Compostella, St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury and the Three Kings at Cologne enjoyed great reputations and attracted vast numbers of pilgrims. Veneration for the Mother of Our Lord led many to visit the shrines of Our Lady—at Boulogne, which was attended by large numbers of French and English sailors; at Chartres, where the veil of the Virgin was the most valued treasure; at Rocamadour, and at Walsingham in Norfolk, where pilgrims were assured that the milk of the Virgin was preserved.

The shrine of Our Lady at Messina was reputed to contain a letter written or dictated by the Virgin herself, in which she congratulated the people of Messina on their conversion. The shrine of Our Lady at Loretto in Italy was said to be the actual house in which the Virgin Mary had been born and to have been carried by angels from Nazareth to Loretto. The Sacred Blood drew many to Bruges; at Argenteuil Christ's seamless coat was the chief attraction, but many asserted that the Holy Coat of Trèves was the real garment of Christ and their claim was supported by a Papal Bull.

Local Saints sometimes secured a European

reputation and the shrines of St. Hugh of Lincoln, St. Martin of Tours, St. Anthony of Padua were attended by many foreign pilgrims. St. Margaret (Queen of Malcolm Canmore, who was buried at Dunfermline), St. Alban and Edward the Confessor had been lay persons and not



Mrs. Fletcher

PART OF ST. OSMUND'S SHRINE,
showing three of the *foramina*

Salisbury Cathedral

ecclesiastics, but their shrines lost no popularity owing to this fact. St. David's Cathedral was so remote that two pilgrimages to St. David's shrine counted as equivalent to one pilgrimage to Rome.

The shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, the splendid chapel of St. Alban

in his own abbey church, the famous shrine of St. Richard at Chichester are only a few of many which deserve special mention.

The Wealth of Shrines.

The offerings of pilgrims, the bequests of jewels and dresses which were often made by pious ladies, the gifts of sick men who hoped the Saint would heal them, or of rich men who by timely donations sought to avert the wrath to come, brought great wealth to many shrines. Erasmus describing the tomb of St. Thomas Becket, said: "Gold was the meanest thing to be seen there; all shone and glittered with the most precious jewels of an extraordinary bigness; some were larger than the egg of a goose." Louis VII. gave to this shrine the *régale*, one of the most valuable of the royal jewels of France. Edward I. presented the golden crown of Scotland; Edward II. gave enough gold to make two figures to adorn the shrine. So vast was the wealth of the shrine that, at the Reformation, the gold and precious stones filled two chests, each so heavy that six or seven men were required to carry it.[1] Erasmus also said that the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham looks like "a seat of the gods, so bright: shining as it is all over with jewels, gold and silver".[2]

The shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham received £3000 a year in offerings. The annual offerings at the holy shrine of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome probably amounted to thirty thousand florins, but rose to eighty thousand in the year of Jubilee, when the offerings were so

[1] *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages*, Heath, 190, 194 and 284.
[2] *In Search of England*, 202.

lavish that the priest had no time to count them but simply raked the gold and silver from the altars.[1] Sometimes thieves stole the treasures, and on one occasion the shrine of St. Edward at Westminster was robbed of many valuable jewels and of rich treasures, of which a golden table was the most important.[2]

Pilgrimages

A pilgrimage was often undertaken as a penance and the conditions of the journey gave the pilgrim reason to regret the sin that had occasioned it. A law of King Edgar[3] ordered a layman when making a pilgrimage "to lay aside his weapons and fare barefoot and nowhere pass a second night, and fast and watch much and pray fervently by day and night, and willingly undergo fatigue, and be so squalid that iron come not on hair or on nail".

A pilgrim wore a loose frock, sometimes patched with crosses, and a broad hat which was fastened under the chin or tied behind the back with loose strings. From his girdle hung a bowl and the scrip, or wallet, in which he kept relics and the food he had begged. He carried a staff, and his staff and scrip were blessed by a priest and sprinkled with holy water before he started on his pilgrimage.[4]

At each famous shrine that he visited the pilgrim bought leaden tokens, which he wore

[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, vii. 85-86.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., viii. 513.
[3] Quoted in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.
[4] *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages*, 120.

round his neck or sewed on to his hat. At Canterbury the token was a leaden flask containing a drop of the blood of St. Thomas Becket; if an unchaste woman came near, the blood began to bubble. At Amiens pilgrims bought leaden impressions of the head of John the Baptist. Shells were the token of St. James of Compostella and the grottoes of oyster shells which boys still build in the streets of London on August 5th, St. James' Day, had their origin in this old custom. The image of the Virgin and Child showed that the pilgrim who carried it had been to Walsingham, and the vernicle was given to pilgrims who visited Genoa.

The heavy cost of pilgrimages was sometimes met by the gifts of the rich or the assistance of friends or guilds. Rich men left bequests to pay for pilgrims who would pray at the holy shrines for the souls of their benefactors. The guild of tailors at Lincoln gave a halfpenny to any of its members who went to Rome or Compostella, and a penny to one who went to Jerusalem. Edward III. gave one of his messengers one pound six shillings and eightpence as a contribution to the cost of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[1]

Some famous Pilgrims.

All sorts and conditions of men and women swelled the ranks of pilgrims. Louis IX. went on a pilgrimage to Sens wearing a pilgrim's garb, carrying a scrip and staff and walking barefooted. Henry III., Edward I. and Edward II. on their pilgrimage to Walsingham passed along the old Peddars' Way, once trodden by the men of the

[1] *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, 380.

Stone Age. They removed their shoes at the neighbouring village of Houghton-le-Dale, where "Shoe Chapel" still stands, and finished their journey without them.[1] On July 12, 1174, Henry II. went to Canterbury to do penance for the murder of St. Thomas. He dismounted from his horse as he approached the city and, clad in the linen robe of a penitent and barefooted, made his way to the martyr's shrine. He knelt and prayed at the door of the Cathedral, kissed the spot where St. Thomas died and, coming to the tomb, stripped himself of his raiment, knelt down and thrust his head into one of the openings through which the coffin could be seen. As he knelt there he was scourged by the clergy. Every bishop and abbot who was present scourged him five times, eighty priests gave him three blows apiece. He spent the night fasting in the church, heard Mass before he left for London in the morning and, when he departed, took with him as a sign of forgiveness some holy water in which the relics of St. Thomas had been steeped. Four days later a messenger arrived in hot haste in London and reported that on the very day on which the King had done penance his forces had routed and captured William the Lion, King of Scotland, who had invaded Northumberland. The victory was regarded as a proof that St. Thomas had accepted the penance and freely forgiven all the evil that Henry had done to him.[2] Louis VII. of France and Richard I. of England visited the shrine in the twelfth century. In 1415 Henry V. came to

[1] *In Search of England*, Methuen, 200.
[2] *Political History of England*, Longmans, ii. 310.

give thanks for his great victory at Agincourt. Manuel, the Greek Emperor, and Sigismund, the Holy Roman Emperor, prayed at the shrine, and in 1520 Henry VIII. and the Emperor Charles V. knelt before it side by side.

Number of Pilgrims.

The number of those who went on pilgrimages in the Middle Ages was enormous. Two million pilgrims visited Rome during the Jubilee of 1300, and probably two hundred thousand visited the shrine of St. Thomas Becket every year. Such great gatherings led to serious difficulties. Many people were trampled to death in Rome during the Jubilee; pilgrims' staffs were formidable weapons and the peace of the city was disturbed by brawls which often ended in bloodshed. The pilgrims who flocked to the shrine of St. Richard at Chichester caused such disorder that in 1478 the Bishop issued orders that pilgrims should give notice of the time of their arrival, so that unseemly crowding might be avoided.[1] St. Robert, who was buried in the monastery of La Chaise Dieu in Auvergne, attracted so many pilgrims by the miracles he wrought that the devotions of the monks were disturbed. They therefore prayed St. Robert "to cease working miracles and disturb Divine service no longer".[2]

Abuses of Pilgrimages.

Many of the pilgrims were sincere; they undertook their journeys in the hope of securing healing for the body or soul, and patiently bore the discomforts which a pilgrimage entailed. But in such vast numbers there were not a few who failed to live up to their professions: the pilgrim's life tended to laziness; it was easy to

[1] *Catholic Encyclopedia*, xii. 85. [2] *Rambles in France*, 90.

secure false relics which the credulous would accept as genuine; the wandering life gave opportunities for immorality and theft of which many took full advantage. Even in early times the abuses of pilgrimages had provoked the censure of the pious. St. Jerome had warned men that the Kingdom of Heaven could be reached as easily from Britain as Jerusalem; St. Chrysostom had protested against the scandals that arose. In the Middle Ages pilgrimages had fallen into such disrepute that John Bromyard, an English Dominican, declared that pilgrims "make their pilgrimage away from God and to the Devil". The Lollards strongly opposed pilgrimages, particularly those made to Our Lady of Walsingham, and protested against the crucifixes which received general adoration from pilgrims and others. The cross at the north door of St. Paul's Cathedral aroused their special condemnation; they declared that there was nothing of God in crucifixes and they were nothing but "rotten stocks".

Economic Results.

But in spite of the evils which pilgrimages necessarily entailed, they served many useful purposes. Many devout souls found in them the peace they sought, and their economic results were important. Pilgrims were among the greatest travellers of the times. Foreign pilgrimages promoted international communication, increased the knowledge of other lands, led to the development of commerce and brought considerable profits to the English shipowners who carried pilgrims to St. James of Compostella or to the Holy Places in Rome and Jerusalem.

Roads were improved to meet the needs of the hosts of pilgrims. The famous Pilgrims' Way from Southampton to Canterbury was the best known. It started from the harbour of Southampton and led first to Winchester, where pilgrims could visit the shrine of St. Swithin. It passed through Farnham, which has long been the official residence of the Bishops of Winchester, and afterwards through Guildford. At Otford it passed near a palace belonging to the Archbishops of Canterbury. At Boxley devout pilgrims visited the Abbey of the Holy Rood.[1] At Charing stood another palace of the Archbishops. Near Bigberry Wood the road joined the Watling Street, where pilgrims from Southampton met those coming from London, the Midlands and the North of England. In due time the pilgrims entered Canterbury by the West Gate and proceeded to the shrine of St. Thomas in the Cathedral.[2]

The necessity for providing food and shelter for pilgrims led to the growth of towns which possessed famous shrines. Before the murder of Becket the shrine of St. Swithin was the most famous in England and the townsfolk of Winchester derived great profit from catering for pilgrims. When pilgrims began to flock to the shrine of St. Thomas Winchester proved less attractive and Canterbury flourished. The attraction of the Shrine of the Virgin turned the

[1] Page 209.

[2] *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages*, Heath, viii. *The Old Road*, by Hilaire Belloc, gives a fascinating account of the Pilgrims' Way.

little village of Walsingham into a fairly large town, consisting, like all pilgrimage towns, largely of inns and churches. When pilgrimages declined, the fortunes of these towns declined, and Canterbury, Walsingham and Winchester play a less important part in modern times than in the Middle Ages.

In some towns that stood on the pilgrims' ways, hostels, often called "Maisons Dieu", were built for the reception of pilgrims. The Guild Merchant of Coventry kept a lodging-house which provided thirteen beds for pilgrims and cost ten pounds a year to maintain.[1] The New Inn at Gloucester, the George Hotel at Glastonbury and the Bell at Tewkesbury were constructed in the Middle Ages to house the pilgrims who visited the local shrines.

[1] *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, 380.

CHAPTER IX

THE MONASTIC SYSTEM

The Development of the Monastic Ideal

The belief that men could not serve God faithfully in a world that was essentially wicked led devout men to separate themselves from their fellows, in the hope that seclusion would enable them to escape temptation. A monk is literally "one who dwells alone".

Early Monasticism.

The earliest type of monasticism appeared about 313 in Egypt, where devout men undertook the hard life of hermits in desert places. These ascetics were organised by St. Pachomius into monasteries, each containing separate houses inhabited by monks practising different trades. Thus at an early age monasticism, which had begun as the solitary life of a hermit, became a system in which brethren lived together as members of a community.

Monasticism spread from the East to the West, largely owing to the working of St. Athanasius. St. Jerome wrote of the noble women who had taken vows at Rome. St. Ambrose founded a monastery at Milan. French monasticism owed its origin to St. Martin, who, about 365, founded outside Tours a monastery in which each of the

eighty brethren lived in a cave or hut and thus resembled the hermits of Egypt. In Wales, Ireland and Scotland the earliest monastic system was of native origin and owed nothing to the influence of the East. Celtic monasteries were merely settlements in which priests and laymen, men, women and children lived together in Christian fellowship.

Although St. Columba and others had drawn up rules for the management of monasteries, these were not generally followed, and early monasticism suffered from undue diversity of practice and lack of general organisation.

St. Benedict.

It is the special glory of St. Benedict of Nursia (480–543) that he drew up a code which imposed on all monasteries a common rule and at the same time left a measure of independence to individual houses. The *Regula Monachorum*, which St. Benedict promulgated at Monte Cassino about 540, regarded each monastery as an independent family, separate and distinct from all others, and required all monks to take a vow to remain in their own monastery for life in strict obedience to the head of the house. It thus gave to religious communities a stability which they had not before enjoyed and tended to ensure continuity of theory and practice. But St. Benedict did not lay down hard-and-fast rules of organisation. His Rule was not exclusive; it permitted differences of practice, and it breathed into monasticism a new spirit which long continued to inspire the religious.

Later developments endeavoured to secure some measure of uniformity of monastic life.

Benedict of Aniane persuaded an Assembly which met at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 817, to draw up rules which would have imposed rigid uniformity on Frankish monasteries, if they had been generally enforced. In his *Concordia Regularis* St. Ethelwold tried to build up in England a system which would have made the King the ultimate authority in monastic affairs. But these attempts to make monasticism national proved unsuccessful.

The Cluniac Movement.

In the eleventh century the Cluniac Movement aimed at uniting all monasteries which were founded by the monks of Cluny in common subjection to their Abbot, who was to nominate every abbot or abbess and to sanction the profession of every monk or nun of each daughter house. Such a conception was directly opposed to St. Benedict's idea that every monastery was an independent family : it tended to make the Abbot of Cluny the head of a feudal hierarchy ; it aimed at establishing, not a new element in the full life of the Christian Church, but a separate and distinct ecclesiastical corporation.

Later Developments.

The destruction of initiative, which was the logical outcome of the Cluniac Movement, led to reaction. About 1022 St. Romuald founded at Camaldoli the Order of Camaldolites, the members of which lived like hermits in solitary independence. About 1086 St. Bruno established at the Grande Chartreuse in Dauphiny the Order of the Carthusians, and in a Carthusian monastery every monk lived like a hermit in a separate cell. The Cistercians, whose order profoundly affected the ecclesiastical and economic

life of Western Europe, were founded about 1098 by Robert, the Benedictine Abbot of Molesme. Under their system each monastery was administered as a family, but every Cistercian monk was a member of a religious order of which the Abbot of Cîteaux was head. The policy of the order was determined at a general chapter held annually at Cîteaux, which every abbot was required to attend. The organisation of every Cistercian monastery was required to conform to the *Charter of Charity* which was drawn up by Stephen Harding, the English Abbot of Cîteaux, and approved by Pope Calixtus II. in 1119.

The hermit life of the Camaldolites and the rigid organisation of the Cistercians were alike opposed to the Benedictine ideal and in 1215 the Lateran Council tried to combine the good points of the Cistercians and Benedictines. It ordered that every three years a general chapter of all abbots and priors should be held. Two Cistercian abbots from neighbouring houses and two Benedictine monks were to preside at the first meeting and the chapters were to make arrangements for the improvement of regular observance. Visitors, appointed by the chapter in the name of the Pope, were to inspect every Benedictine house and to report to the bishops any abbot who was unworthy of his office. Under this arrangement each monastery remained an independent family in accordance with the ideas of St. Benedict, but the system of visitation and the maintenance of episcopal jurisdiction promoted good discipline, while the triennial chapters secured a certain measure of

The Lateran Council of 1215.

co-operation and mutual support. Unfortunately, the new scheme was successfully maintained only in England, where it was never materially altered. Neither France nor Italy made effective use of this opportunity of improving the position of their religious houses and rectifying monastic abuses.

Regular Canons.

The twelfth century saw a new departure which greatly strengthened the influence of monasticism. The idea of seclusion from the world had been an essential part of monastic life; the pastoral care of the people had been left entirely to the secular parish priests. The establishment of Regular[1] Canons was an attempt to combine the advantages of both systems.

Regular Canons lived in religious houses and, as their name implies, observed a definite rule; but they also acted as parish priests and preached in the churches which were often found just outside the wall of their monasteries. The Austin or Augustinian Canons, who took their name from St. Augustine of Hippo, were formally constituted by Pope Alexander IV. in 1256, over a hundred years after their foundation. Norbert established the Premonstratensian Canons near Laon and called the place Prémontré,[2] because he believed that the site had been pointed out to him by an angel.

The Spread of Religious Houses

Missionaries founded Monasteries.

By founding monasteries to continue the good work they had commenced, missionary monks endeavoured to consolidate the position they

[1] Latin *regula*, "a rule of conduct".

[2] *Pratum Monstratum*, "the field that was pointed out".

had secured by their devoted service in heathen lands. St. Augustine founded a monastery at Canterbury. Monks came from the older monasteries of Ireland and founded a new house at Iona, over which St. Columba ruled with firm but kindly sway. From Iona, St. Aidan passed to the monastery at Lindisfarne, and the new name of Holy Island testified to the profound influence for good that Aidan and his monks exercised over the rude Northumbrians. Boniface, a native of Devonshire, is ever remembered as the apostle of Northern Germany. He showed his courage by felling the great oak at Geismar which had long been the hallowed emblem of Thor; the god did not avenge the deed and the heathen readily listened to the teaching of the valiant Christian. Boniface established many bishoprics, and the great Abbey of Fulda, founded with his approval, remained for centuries a centre of Christianity and civilisation.

New Rules led to the Foundation of Monasteries.

The institution of a new Rule led to the establishment of new monasteries. The Order of St. Benedict spread with remarkable rapidity over Western Europe. Within a few years of St. Benedict's death a Benedictine house was found in practically every great town in Italy. The monks soon established themselves in France where many splendid monasteries were built, and the older houses accepted the Benedictine Rule. St. Augustine introduced it into England, where in later years "in every rich valley, by the side of every clear and deep stream, arose a Benedictine abbey".[1] The extension

[1] *History of Latin Christianity*, ii. 94.

of the Cistercian Order was one of the chief features of the ecclesiastical history of the twelfth century. Rievaulx Abbey, the first of the English houses, was founded in 1131 [1] and the Abbot of Rievaulx was the head of the order in England. Tintern was founded in 1131 and Fountains in 1132.

Mother and Daughter Abbeys.

The monks "swarmed like bees"; great houses often became mother abbeys, whose fame was sometimes rivalled by the daughter monasteries. In 1074, Ealdwine, Prior of Winchcombe; Aelfwine, a deacon of Evesham; and Reinfred, who had proved himself a very strenuous soldier in the Conqueror's army and may have afterwards become a lay brother in Evesham Abbey, went on a missionary tour in the North of England. The Prior travelled with little state, and one ass was sufficient to carry his vestments, books and scanty luggage.[2] As a result of the journey the two former revived the monasteries of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow. Reinfred proceeded to Whitby, where he found a few monks living the life of hermits in the ruined Abbey. He was "pricked to the heart" by the ruin and desolation he beheld; William de Percy gave him the shattered walls and empty altars of the Abbey and he refounded the monastery. His life of humility and charity afforded "an example of virtue and piety to all around, so that in a short time he collected a number of respectable men, who assumed the monastic habit as part of his brotherhood".[3]

[1] Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v. 274.

[2] *Simeon of Durham*, R.S., i. 108. [3] *The Whitby Chartulary*, 2.

The Chancel, Rievaulx Abbey

In 1136, on the invitation of David I., some monks went from Rievaulx to found the great Abbey of Melrose. Fountains, which had been founded by monks from the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary's, York, had, within twenty years of its own establishment, founded, either directly or through daughter houses, eleven new Cistercian monasteries.[1] Eleven houses owed their origin to the Abbey of Waverley in Surrey. By about 1200, one hundred and twenty Cistercian Abbeys had been established in England and the Premonstratensians soon gained a footing in the country. By the end of the reign of Henry III. the Augustinian Canons possessed some fifty houses in England, and in the sixteenth century this number had risen to one hundred and seventy.

The North Riding

The history of the North Riding of Yorkshire shows clearly how great a hold the monasteries gained on the country. In this limited area were found at least twenty-five religious houses belonging to seven different orders. Whitby Abbey, where "Holy Hilda" ruled from 657 to 680 and Caedmon sang, was the most famous of the Benedictine foundations. Rievaulx, Byland, Jervaulx and five smaller houses were Cistercian. The Premonstratensians built abbeys at Easby, Coverham and Eggleston and, in accordance with their custom, the White Canons painted their carts white and used only white oxen. Guisbrough was the most famous of the three priories of the Augustinians or Black Canons, and here, as is often

[1] Newminster, Pipewell, Sawley, Roche, Kirkstead, Louth Park, Woburn, Lyse in Norway, Kirkstall, Meaux, Vaudey.

the case, the parish church, which the Canons served, is built just outside the wall of the Priory. Grosmont takes its name from a house which depended on the French Priory of Grandimont.

Godfrey Bingley

CELL AT MOUNT GRACE PRIORY

Showing food hatch and Scrope Arms

At Mount Grace Priory the separate cells occupied by the Carthusians may be clearly traced around the cloister, and in several the right-angled hatch, through which the inmate received his food, still remains. Malton Priory

Godfrey Bingley

Cloister Court, Jervaulx Abbey

belonged to the Gilbertines, the only English order, and was the burial-place of their founder, St. Gilbert of Sempringham.

The Foundation of Religious Houses

The foundation of a monastery was usually associated with the name of a king or great nobleman who gave the original endowment. A grant by a tenant-in-chief required the sanction of the King and no abbey could be established without the Pope's approval.

Motives of Founders.

Benefactions were prompted by a desire to ensure the eternal salvation of the donor and his family. Everard de Ros gave a part of the township of Helmsley to the Abbey of Rievaulx "for the safety of the soul of Walter l'Espec, the founder of the same church, and for the safety of my soul and the souls of my wife and of all my heirs and relatives".[1] In many cases such gifts were prompted by the purest motives, but not infrequently the foundation of a monastery was an act of expiation. King Athelstan founded Milton Abbey to atone for the death of his brother Edwin, for which he was morally responsible. Offa, King of Mercia, sought to win forgiveness for the murder of Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, by building at St. Albans an abbey for a hundred monks, to which he transferred the bones of St. Alban, the first British martyr. Some Cistercian abbots came to beg King John to lighten the load of taxation he had laid upon them. The King bade his soldiers ride the suppliants down, but

[1] *Rievaulx Chartulary*, 23.

they refused. That night the King dreamed that God had ordered the abbots to scourge him for oppressing their order and so vivid was the dream that he felt sore and bruised when he awoke. A friend advised him to appease the wrath of God by founding an abbey and he therefore established Beaulieu Abbey in the New Forest.[1] John's example proved conclusively that some founders were anything but pious.

The foundation of a monastery was sometimes an act of thanksgiving. In gratitude for his victory at Hastings, William the Conqueror founded Battle Abbey on the battlefield, and the High Altar stood on the spot where Harold had fallen.

Sites of Monasteries often remote.

The work of erecting buildings was carried on by monks and the sites of many monasteries were remote and desolate. The *Charter of Charity* required the Cistercians to build their abbeys " in places remote from the intercourse of men ". Cîteaux itself was a place " remote and unapproachable . . . struggling, as it were, with the forest and the marsh ".[2] Rievaulx was founded in " a place of vast solitude and horror ",[3] but in time the patient labours of the monks made " the desert to blossom like a rose ".

The Benedictine monks of St. Mary's Abbey at York had become too fond of good living and some even indulged in horse racing. Prior Richard and twelve monks determined to build a new abbey under the stricter Cistercian Rule and

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 488 and 668.
[2] *History of Latin Christianity*, iv. 308.
[3] *William of Newburgh*, i. 14.

chose a deep and dark valley near Ripon as the site of their new monastery.[1] Here they lived amid great privations during the winter of 1132-1133. Their only shelter was a great elm tree, which is still standing, and, owing to lack of provisions, they were compelled to eat the leaves of the tree, which remained green all through the winter. But, in spite of intense cold, hunger and destitution, they remained faithful to the task they had undertaken and the splendid ruins of Fountains Abbey give proof of their devotion. The valley in which Furness Abbey was built was known as the Valley of the Deadly Nightshade, but the faithful monks who settled there were preserved from poison. Jervaulx Abbey was originally established at Fors, but the soil was stony and barren, and the climate unhealthy; robbers stole the property of the monks, and cattle that were not stolen by robbers were carried off by wolves. About 1156 the monks transferred the monastery to Jervaulx, in the valley of the Yore, where Conan, Earl of Richmond, gave them a more favourable site.[2] A Cistercian Abbey was founded at Stanlaw on the coast of Cheshire in 1172, but the unhealthy position led to much sickness, and high tides not only made the monastery inaccessible but flooded part of the buildings. In 1296 the Abbey was transferred to an inland site at Whalley in Lancashire.[3]

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 155. [2] Dugdale, *Monasticon*, i. 873.
[3] *The Greater Abbeys of England*, 262.

CHAPTER X

ENGLISH MONASTIC LIFE

The Wealth of the Religious Houses

Endowments and Gifts.

The generosity of pious founders and later benefactors endowed many of the monasteries with great domains. During the lifetime of Reinfrid, Whitby Abbey received the town and harbour of Whitby and within thirty years of its foundation the Abbey secured the whole of Whitby Strand, measuring some seventeen miles in length and six to seven in breadth.[1] Walter l'Espec endowed Rievaulx Abbey at its foundation with about 1000 acres and soon added greatly to its possessions.[2] Within fifty years of its foundation the Abbey had received about 6000 acres.[3] During his lifetime Robert de Brus gave to Guisbrough Priory at least two thousand acres of cultivated land, about eight thousand acres of common and moor, and ten churches.[4] In 656, Wulfhere gave to Peterborough (then called Medhamstead) "these lands and these waters and meres and fens and wiers and all the lands that hereabout lie that are of my kingdom, freely, so that no

[1] *Early History of the North Riding*, 134.
[2] *Rievaulx Chartulary*, lxvi.
[3] *Early History of the North Riding*, 138.
[4] *Ibid.* 148.

man have there any ingress save the Abbot and the monks ".[1] He made his generous gift before witnesses and confirmed it on the Cross of Christ. In the time of Edward I. Furness Abbey derived an income of £18,000 a year from its temporalities,[2] and Cardinal Langham gave to Westminster Abbey gifts of the value of £10,800.[3]

The humbler gifts of the poor supplemented the generous benefactions of the rich. " Agnes, the daughter of William the Forester, widow of William the Miller," gave a toft, or homestead, to Guisbrough Priory ; Acciline of Linthorpe (now a part of Middlesbrough) gave four and a half acres to Whitby Abbey.[4]

Gifts were often made to secure admission as a novice or to gain the highly esteemed privilege of burial within the walls of the monastery. The nuns of St. Rhadegund, Cambridge, paid for their meat by taking in the butcher's daughter.[5] Sometimes gifts were allocated to a special object or made in return for services rendered. A toft was given to Whitby to maintain a lamp before the High Altar, and about thirty acres were given for " making and writing books " and half a toft for the repair of books.[6] A gift was made to Guisbrough Priory to pay the cost of fuel and fire " for the poor people who are lodged there ".[7] Early in the thirteenth century Richard de Percy gave the Abbey of Whitby a carucate of land in

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Everyman's Library, 37.
[2] *The Greater Abbeys of England.*
[3] *Ibid.* 251.
[4] *Whitby Chartulary*, i. 113.
[5] *Mediaeval England*, 336.
[6] *Whitby Chartulary*, i. 19.
[7] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, i. 148.

return for the money "with which they liberated me from the Jews".

Abbeys often let their lands and an instance from the records of Peterborough suggests that they knew how to drive a hard bargain. About 852, Abbot Ceolred let certain land to one Wilfrid, on condition that Wilfrid should "give the land of Sleaford to Medhamstead, and should send each year into the monastery sixty loads of wood, twelve loads of coal, six loads of peat, two tuns full of fine ale, two neats' carcases, six hundred loaves, and ten kilderkins of Welsh ale; one horse also each year, and thirty shillings, and one night's entertainment".

Landowners often granted rights of pasturage on their lands. Rievaulx received from one benefactor the right of grazing a thousand sheep;[1] from another, pasturage for sixty mares and their foals, for twelve cows and two bulls;[2] from a third, pasturage for thirty cows with their calves, one bull and two hundred sheep.[3]

Rights of passage were a valuable concession at a time when roads were often impassable. One Richard Cumin gave to the monks of Rievaulx permission to have "in wood and plain, pastures, moors, marshes and waters, paths and ways, what is necessary to them".[4] William, Earl of Aumale, gave to the monks of Meaux free passage over the Humber.[5]

Forest and hunting rights of considerable value were often granted to religious houses. Whitby Forest belonged to the Abbey. Henry

[1] *Rievaulx Chartulary*, 51. [2] *Ibid.* 68. [3] *Ibid.* 79.
[4] *Ibid.* 214. [5] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. xix.

III. gave to the Canons of Guisbrough the right of hunting in some of their demesne lands.[1] Grants of woodland, of turf and brushwood were common. In 1242, Peter de Brus II. solemnly gave the Prior of Guisbrough permission to gather nuts in his wood.[2]

Grants of fish and fisheries were important at a time when the pious ate no meat in Lent, on Fridays or Fast Days. The monks of Byland received from Adam de Brus exemption from all tolls on the fish they bought at Coatham; Bernard de Baliol gave the monks of Rievaulx a salmon fishery on the Tees; Bernard de Cotyngham gave certain fisheries in Hull to the monks of Meaux.[3]

Monasteries were enriched by valuable gifts of plate, jewels and vestments. Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, gave to Bury St. Edmunds a golden cross with many jewels surmounting a golden carbuncle, and the same Abbey received from Eleanor of Aquitaine, the Queen of Henry III., a chalice of gold weighing nearly fourteen marks. Abbot Leofric added greatly to the treasures of Peterborough; he "gilded the minster so that it was called Gildenborough; and it then waxed very much in land and in gold and silver".[4] William the Conqueror gave to Battle Abbey his royal pallium and very costly gems, as well as three hundred amulets wrought of gold and silver and containing innumerable relics of saints. The most valuable treasure of Titchfield Abbey was a great silver-gilt cross with images of the

[1] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, ii. 133. [2] *Ibid.* i. 117.
[3] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 100. [4] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 138.

Virgin Mary and St. John. The list of the precious possessions of St. Albans Abbey fills nine pages of Matthew Paris' *Chronicle*[1] and includes ruby, topaz, sapphire rings, a peridot with a sapphire, a cameo given by Æthelred II. and costly hangings of which Matthew himself had given four.

Privileges

Monasteries received great privileges from the Kings of England.

Jurisdiction.

All the great houses received by royal grant the rights of civil and criminal jurisdiction, and most possessed the power of life and death. The Abbots of St. Mary's, York, and Byland had their own gallows at York, and did not scruple to use them. Many monasteries were exempted from the obligation to appear in the ordinary law courts; Henry II. gave to Rievaulx exemption from Shire and Hundred courts.[2] The View of Frankpledge, an inquiry into the administration of criminal law, which was one of the duties of a Sheriff, was exercised by the heads of Guisbrough Priory, Whitby Abbey and many another monastery. An Ordinance of 1257 forbade the King's Justices, when they came to York, to hold their pleas in St. Mary's Abbey "save at the good will of the Abbot and monks".[3]

Remission of Taxes and Services.

Kings sometimes granted to monastic houses a remission of taxes or secular services. Henry I. exempted the monks of Rievaulx from the payment of danegeld on some of their lands and

[1] vi. 383–392. [2] *Rievaulx Chartulary*, i. 144.
[3] *Charter Rolls*, 1226–1257, 461.

from payment of tolls and bridge dues on their men, horses and property; he ordered his officials at Southampton, Hastings, Dover, Benfleet and Portsmouth to see that the usual charges were remitted in their case.[1] Edward I. freed the Abbey from the duty of repairing the royal castles and bridges.[2] St. Mary's Abbey, York, was exempt from murage, a toll levied on goods brought into or sold in a walled town and used at York for the repair of the city walls.[3]

Monasteries sometimes received exemption from the military service that was due on account of their lands. Special mention should be made of the right of coining money which was granted to the Abbot of Reading. Some coins struck in the Abbey Mint may still be seen in Reading Museum.[4]

Remission of Tithes.

The remission of tithes due to Popes or Archbishops sometimes proved a valuable boon. Byland Abbey was exempted from payment of tithes on land by Pope Alexander III. and from tithes of the produce of their mines by Pope Gregory IX. About 1254 the Abbot of Whitby agreed to pay three thousand "good" herrings (the adjective is significant) as acknowledgment of his exemption from certain tithes which were payable to the Archbishop of York.

The Work of the Monks

Religious Services.

Monasteries were established that the inmates might retire from the world and save their own

[1] *Rievaulx Chartulary*, 141. [2] *Ibid.* 130.
[3] *Charter Rolls*, 1226–1257, 461.
[4] *A School History of Berkshire*, 85.

souls by worshipping God. St. Benedict required his followers to spend their time in the worship of God, reading and manual labour. They were called "religious" from *religio*, the bond that bound them together in the service of God. The "opus Dei" was their first concern. "What", asks William of Newburgh, "are such religious dwellings but the camps of God, where the soldiers of Christ, our King, keep guard, and the recruits are trained against the assaults of spiritual wickedness?" Eight services were supposed to be held every day, at intervals of about three hours. The monks rose at 2 A.M. for Matins; Lauds followed at daybreak; Prime was sung at six o'clock. At nine, the third hour, came Terce; at noon, Sext; three hours later the monks assembled for Nones. Vespers was the evening service at six; and Compline, at eight, was a service of thanksgiving for the completion of the day's work.

But there was considerable variation from the regular order of service. The Cistercians divided the day into twelve hours of light and twelve of darkness, and the interval between their services was shorter in winter than summer. The Carthusians were roused about 11 P.M. by an officer called an Excitator for a night office at 11.45. The Augustinian Canons were excused attendance at their Priory Church when they were conducting services at the Parish Church.

Special services included "Obits" held on the anniversary of the death of a benefactor, and the ceremonies which attended the death of one of the brethren. In Cistercian monasteries a

board of hard wood was beaten with two hammers as a sign of the approach of death. The dying monk was taken out of his bed and placed upon a cross of ashes on the floor. All the brethren assembled in solemn silence, and the Abbot, in their presence, administered the last Sacrament.

But the monasteries gradually came into closer touch with the people. The life of the monks became practical and not merely contemplative, and the country profited greatly by their work.

Monasteries became, in a varying degree, the homes of learning. The library was an important part of the house. At the end of the fourteenth century there were eighty-nine manuscripts in Whitby Abbey. Of these, sixty were theological, but Cicero, Juvenal, Persius and Statius worthily represented the Latin classical authors, and it is noteworthy that, although Greek was little studied in England, copies of Plato and Homer were included. Other books were the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius, Priscian's Grammar, an Introduction to Music, a treatise on Arithmetic and *Natura Bestiarum*, a treatise on Natural History. St. Albans, Peterborough and Westminster Abbeys contained famous libraries. Abbot Paul (1077 to 1093) gave twenty-eight manuscripts to St. Albans; Abbot Benedict, who became Abbot of Peterborough in 1177, gave fifty-three volumes, which included twenty-one volumes of the Bible, to the Abbey.[1] Monastic Libraries.

The cloisters often formed the studies of the brethren, and most of the mediaeval chronicles Monastic Writers.

[1] *Monastic Life in the Middle Ages*, 94, 101.

were the work of the monks. The monastic registers are mines of information as to the conditions of life of the monks and the relations, not always happy, between them and their neighbours. Matthew Paris became Chronicler of St. Albans in 1236 and in his *Chronica Majora* continued the history which his predecessor, Roger of Wendover, had carried down to 1135 in his *Flores Historiae*. Ranulf Higden, the author of the *Polychronicon*, one of the most interesting of mediaeval chronicles, was a brother of the Benedictine monastery of St. Werburg, Chester. Aelred, third Abbot of Rievaulx, wrote a chronicle of the reign of Henry I., to which we are indebted for our knowledge of the Battle of the Standard. Robert, who became Abbot of St. Albans in 1151, "wrote so many books that it would occupy too much space to put down their names". Richard de Bury (1281–1345), who became Bishop of Durham in 1333, wrote *Philobiblon*, or Love of Books. He carried out his own precepts and censured the conduct of one of his monks who read at meals "and was not ashamed to eat fruit and cheese over an open book, or to transfer his empty cup from side to side so that it dripped on the leaves".[1]

Monastic Schools.

The Precentor, or, where such an officer was appointed, the Master of the Novices, acted as schoolmaster and taught the younger members of the community. In 1334 the Benedictines were required to arrange for instruction to be given in grammar, logic and philosophy, but lay students were not to be allowed to study with

[1] Quoted in a *School History of Durham*, 145.

the monks. In many monasteries lay boys enjoyed that privilege and the monastery served as a school for the promising children of the neighbourhood.

Agriculture.

The Cistercians laid great stress on the importance of manual work and as agriculturists, architects and men of business rendered great service to their day and generation. Their labours often transformed the country-side, and everywhere fruitful cornfields and vast flocks of sheep bore testimony to their skill as farmers. The regular monks took their share in the work and were allowed to say the offices of Sext and Nones in the field instead of returning to the church for service. But most of the work was done by *conversi*, or lay brethren, usually unlettered, who had their separate quarters in the monastery. Their lack of learning prevented them from taking a full share in the services of the Church, but they were required to repeat the Pater Noster and Gloria Patri frequently, to attend Mass on Sunday and to receive Communion seven times a year. Owing to the strain of their hard labour they rose later than the monks, received an additional allowance of coarse bread and were excused certain fasts. The brethren and *conversi* sang a Psalm as they went out to the fields, and the Abbot or Prior who accompanied them prayed for a blessing on their labour.

Land at a distance was worked from granges, which were built to afford accommodation for the *conversi*, who could not return to the Abbey at night, and to store the produce of farms until

it could be forwarded to the Abbey or sold to merchants. In 1244 Malton Priory had eleven granges.[1] St. Leonard's Grange, which belonged to Beaulieu Abbey, was two hundred feet long and seventy feet broad.[2]

Building.

The monks were great builders. The erection of their monastic houses was a labour of love and such remains as Beaulieu, Fountains, Tintern and Rievaulx attest the skill of their architects. They rendered great service to travellers by building bridges and making roads. The monks quarried stone and burnt lime.

Iron-working.

They sometimes manufactured the iron they used in their building operations or for domestic purposes. The monks of Furness erected two furnaces on Walney Island to smelt iron. Remains of monastic iron-workings may still be seen on the Cleveland Hills. Cinder Hill Farm in Danby Dale takes its name from the grass-grown cinder tip on which the monks threw their refuse; at Rievaulx the slag which was made in the monks' furnaces may still be seen built into local walls. Guisbrough Priory and Byland Abbey had their own forges, and the monks of the Middle Ages were the pioneers of the iron trade of Middlesbrough. The lead mines of Wensleydale, in the north-west of Yorkshire, were worked by the monks of Jervaulx.

Wool and Fisheries.

The monks derived great profits from their corn, wool and fisheries. About 1270 the monks of Meaux sold one hundred and twenty sacks of

[1] *The Early History of the North Riding*, 167.

[2] For details of the management of a monastic manor, see *Mediaeval England*, 120.

wool to the merchants of Lucca.[1] In the middle of the fourteenth century the Canons of Malton made an average annual profit on their wool of £373 : 3 : 6. In six months ending May 1394, Whitby Abbey made, from the sale of fish,[2] £42 : 8 : 3, which is equivalent to perhaps £1300 in modern money, and the salmon fisheries of the Tees and Wye brought considerable revenue to the local abbeys.

Military Service.

Much of the land of the monasteries was held *in francalmoin*, or free alms, and was therefore exempt from the obligation of military service. But such service was due from other portions of monastic estates and the religious houses were sometimes required to supply transport and provisions for the King's forces. The monasteries of the North, which was continually disturbed by Scottish inroads, were required to give military service more frequently than those situated in more peaceful districts. At the battle of Flodden Field, Sir Edward Stanley commanded a force of 1200 men supplied by Furness Abbey.[3] In 1314 the Abbots of St. Mary's, York, Rievaulx and Byland united with the heads of other Yorkshire houses to take measures to oppose the Scots.

Crafts-men.

Each monastery was self-sufficient and skilled craftsmen supplied the needs of the brethren. The tanners made the leather they required for their feet. Their clothes were made from wool spun in the *laniaria*. Some of the monks were

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., xxii.
[2] *Memorials of Old Whitby*, 198.
[3] *The Greater Abbeys of England*, 78.

skilled workers in gold, silver and precious stones; in some houses the most valuable treasures had been made by one of the brethren, and St. Albans was famous for its beautiful metal work. The most famous craftsman of the Abbey was Brother Anketil, who, in his earlier days, had been the chief of the goldsmiths at the Danish Court.[1] Anketil began about 1124 to make the famous shrine to which the remains of St. Alban were committed on August 2, 1129. The shrine was covered with gold repoussé work and adorned with cameos, and, some fifty years later, was adorned with a beautiful canopy which was made by "Master John the goldsmith", probably a layman, who seems to have been nearly as skilful as Brother Anketil.[2] Matthew Paris [3] devotes a whole section to the works with which Richard the Painter adorned the Abbey.

Hospitality.

Travellers found a resting-place in the religious houses, and many of the Kings and Queens of England enjoyed their hospitality. Those of high rank were entertained within the monastery; wayfaring men of humble degree, such as pedlars and pilgrims, found food and shelter in the guest-house.

Poor Relief.

Religious houses recognised the duty of relieving the poor, but, although many enjoyed their bounty, it seems probable that the indiscriminate relief they afforded did much to perpetuate poverty. At Meaux [4] seven acres of land were given to meet the cost of alms bestowed at the gate, and a tenth of the cheese coming from

[1] *Monastic Life in the Middle Ages*, 41. [2] *Ibid.* 43.
[3] vi. 202. [4] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 65.

certain pastures was allocated to the relief of the poor; the tanner had to supply to the porter every year twenty tanned ox-hides to make shoes for the poor.[1] At Furness Abbey five oxen were given to the poor on St. Crispin's Day and the value of the charity bestowed in this Abbey every year was said to be £500. The monks of Margam Abbey, in Glamorganshire, were so generous that their supplies were increased by Divine assistance. Once when their stock of food was exhausted and a ship bringing corn from Bristol was held up by contrary winds, a field near the Abbey suddenly ripened a month before the time of harvest and supplied corn to relieve the needs of the monks and the poor who depended upon them.[2]

Difficulties of the Monks

The work of the monks brought them into contact with all sorts and conditions of men and differences of interest sometimes led to serious trouble.

Tithes and Advowsons.

Religious houses did not always live at peace with their neighbours, and problems as to the ownership of tithes and the right to the advowson of churches proved a fairly common cause of discord. The monks of Meaux brought a suit against the nuns of Swine Priory and appealed to the Pope. The nuns persistently refused to plead before a Papal Commission, and in consequence the Prioress was excommunicated in her own church, services were suspended in the

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. xiv.
[2] *Itinerary*, Everyman's Library, 63.

conventual church, and the nuns were ordered to surrender the church of Drypool to the monks. The monks claimed the church, but the nuns made a breach in the walls and occupied the building. They gave in only after the secular power of the Sheriff had been invoked to enforce the decisions of the Commission.[1]

In 1262 a great contest arose between the Abbot of Whitby and the Bishop of Carlisle. The Abbey owned the church of Crosby Ravensworth in Westmorland, and the Abbot supported the vicar, who refused to pay certain tithes on wool and lambs to the Bishop. The decision was given against Whitby, but the original sentence was reversed on appeal to the Pope. A third trial resulted in a verdict for the Bishop owing to bribery at Rome. The Abbot and vicar were excommunicated for refusing to accept this result and for holding the church by force. The case dragged on until 1280, when the Abbot made good his claim.[2]

Attempts were sometimes made by laymen to resume rights of presentation given to religious houses by their ancestors. Adam de Brus II. claimed as against the Prior of Guisbrough the advowson of Skelton Church which had been granted to the Prior by his grandfather. His claim was apparently unfounded, and later, fearing that his soul was endangered by his action, he gave the church freely to the Prior. A suit as to the church of Kirkleatham proved somewhat discreditable to the Canons. The advowson

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. xiii.
[2] *Early History of the North Riding*, 183.

had been given to them by William de Kilton, but in 1229 the grant was annulled in favour of the donor's niece, on the ground that it had been given when the donor was on his death-bed and not in full possession of his faculties.[1]

The wealth of the religious houses aroused much envy; the descendants of pious founders sometimes resented the lavish grants their ancestors had bestowed, and monastic property often became the prey of greedy kings or impoverished nobles. During his quarrel with Henry II., Becket fled to France, where he found a refuge in the Cistercian Abbey of Pontigny. The King, therefore, confiscated the land of the Cistercian Abbeys in England, and some of the leading nobles of the North Riding took advantage of the opportunity to seize land belonging to Rievaulx Abbey. The monks appealed to Pope Alexander III., who instructed the Abbot of St. Mary's, York, to compel the offenders to make restitution, and in case of refusal, "to light candles and excommunicate them publicly".[2]

Disputes as to Trespass.

The possession of land led to disputes as to trespass and right of way, while the tenants were sometimes at issue with their monastic landlords as to the rights they claimed or the services they owed. A quarrel broke out between the monks of Rievaulx and Byland as to the possession of certain iron furnaces. An agreement was made that Byland should have minerals and wood for six furnaces, while the monks of one

[1] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, i. viii.
[2] *Early History of the North Riding*, 184.

abbey were not to trespass on the lands of the other. Any monk offending through carelessness was to be beaten in the chapter-house on the following Sunday, and to take his meals in the refectory, not at the table, but on the ground. A serious quarrel arose between Peter de Brus III. and John, Prior of Guisbrough. The Prior claimed certain rights of pasture on Glaisdale Moor which prejudiced Peter's right of hunting. In 1246 the Prior brought an action against Peter for unjustly impounding stray cattle. Finally the Prior agreed to respect Peter's hunting rights, and Peter promised that any of the Prior's cattle found straying on his land should not be impounded but driven back to the Prior's land without injury.

Fishing Rights.

A quarrel arose between the monks of Meaux and those of St. Mary's Abbey, York, as to the right of fishing in Hornsea Mere and the possession of adjoining land. The boundary of the land claimed for Meaux had been traced by a man on horseback and marked with posts, but the Abbot of St. Mary's refused to accept the boundary. The rival parties agreed that the case should be decided by judicial combat. The monks of Meaux, at considerable cost, engaged seven champions and on the appointed day selected one to maintain their cause. The combat took place at York and lasted from morning until evening. The champion of Meaux was gradually overcome, but the combat was stopped by one of the judges who was friendly to the losing side. The monks thereupon gave up their claim to the fishing and received from

the Abbot of St. Mary's a grant of land in exchange.[1]

Difficulties with Tenants.

The monks of Meaux had considerable difficulty with their tenants. They endeavoured to limit the tenants' right to common of pasture.[2] The serfs of the Abbey strove to secure their freedom but their efforts were frustrated by the Abbot, who tried to maintain his cause by legal process and won his case by bribing the King's Council and the Chancellor.[3] On one occasion the Abbey was fined sixty marks for the death of a bondman of Sutton who was slain while resisting the attempt of the monks to seize his land by force.[4]

Disputes with Citizens.

Monasteries which were situated in towns were sometimes involved in disputes with the townspeople. The Abbot was often the lord of the manor and wished to maintain his authority unimpaired ; the citizens desired to make their town a self-governing, independent community. The difficulty of reconciling these two aims caused quarrels, which at Norwich and Bury St. Edmunds led to pitched battles between the opposing parties.

The monks of Norwich were too proud of their possessions, the Prior was haughty, the townspeople were determined to maintain their rights. In 1280 the people tried to set fire to the Abbey gate ; the Prior's men shot Greek fire at them from the top of the Cathedral tower. Fire broke out and the Cathedral and most of the monastery were burned.[5] In 1327 the aldermen of Bury St. Edmunds led the people in an attack on the

[1] *Meaux Chronicles*, R.S., ii. 97. [2] *Ibid.* 93. [3] *Ibid.* i. xx.
[4] *Ibid.* ii. ix. [5] *Lanercost Chronicle*, 20.

monastery. The church and monastic buildings were sacked and burned; the Prior was compelled by force to renounce some of the rights the Abbey had long enjoyed and to pay a large amount of money to the people. The latter held the buildings for ten months, and when they were recaptured by the Sheriff and some soldiers of the King "the monks' common room was the only place with a roof on it in which to stable the horses".[1]

Internal Difficulties.

Difficulties arose within the religious houses. The election of an Abbot sometimes caused serious differences. Some heads of houses exercised their authority with little regard for the feelings of the brethren.

The first period of office of William of Dringhow, Abbot of Meaux from 1349 to 1352, was disturbed by the intrigues of John of Ryslay, the cellarer. Ryslay bribed the Abbot of Fountains with a tun of wine, and the Abbot of Louth Park with other presents, to hold a visitation of Meaux Abbey. He accused Dringhow of malversation, and the Abbot was deposed by the visitors, who nominated Ryslay as his successor. The monks elected another candidate but the Abbot of Fountains refused to accept him, on the ground of his weak vision, and reaffirmed the appointment of Ryslay. Dringhow fled to Rome, and owing to his representations Ryslay was summoned to answer for his conduct to the Pope. He resigned his Abbey on July 4, 1356, rather than face the charges brought against him. Again dissensions broke out, but the new Abbot, Robert of Beverley, remained in office until his death in 1367. The

[1] *The Greater Abbeys of England*, 51.

monks quarrelled violently as to the respective merits of two rival candidates and finally united to re-elect William of Dringhow, who in 1372 entered upon his second term of office. Dringhow succeeded in coming to terms with the turbulent John of Ryslay, who had become an inmate of Roche Abbey, survived for four years and in this time reduced the debt of the Abbey from £230 to £80 : 12 : 2½.[1]

Further difficulties arose on the election of Abbot Thomas Burton in 1396. The monks protested at a chapter of Cistercians held in London that the Duke of Gloucester had forced them to accept Burton against their will. The chapter commissioned the Abbots of Furness and Roche to investigate the case, but the Abbot of Fountains ordered the gates of Meaux Abbey to be shut against the Commissioners and posted men " well equipped with bows and arrows and other weapons of war " to prevent them from entering. An appeal to Rome led to the annulment of the Commission. The monks then sought the help of Edmund, Earl of Aumale, and the validity of the election of Thomas Burton was formally declared by Commissioners whose arbitration was accepted by both parties. But attempts to punish the monks for their opposition to the Abbot led to further appeals to Rome and Burton resigned his office to save the Abbey from the expense of further litigation.[2] " It is said that from the time of his first appointment to the day of his resignation he had not spent one month in peace." [3]

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., iii. xv. to xxiv.
[2] *Ibid.* 267-271.
[3] *Ibid.* 174.

Some heads of houses ruled with too strong a hand, and the Prioress of Yeddingham, who was ordered " to mingle oil with wine " in administering discipline,[1] was not the only one who merited such an admonition. When the Saxon monks of Glastonbury Abbey refused to adopt the new chants which Thurstan, their Norman Abbot, wished to introduce, the latter sent a force of armed men who fired on the monks in church, killed three and wounded eighteen.

Financial Position

Destruction of Monastic Property.

In spite of their vast wealth, the financial position of the monastic houses was very precarious. Their possessions were sometimes destroyed by ruthless invaders and seized by envious neighbours.

In the early days of the Middle Ages monasteries were often sacked by the Danes, who burned the monastic buildings and carried off their treasures, although the monks sometimes succeeded in saving the relics of their Patron Saints, which they regarded as the most valuable of their possessions. In 870 the Danes burned Croyland Abbey and the monks fled in terror, carrying with them the body of their founder, St. Guthlac, his Psalter and the whip with which he was wont to scourge his body ; in the same year they utterly destroyed Peterborough Abbey. In 930 they sacked St. Albans Abbey, but the monks saved the relics of St. Alban and sent them for safety to Denmark. The abbeys in the North of England

[1] Dugdale, *Monasticon*, vi.

suffered greatly from Scottish raids. In 1137 the Abbot of Calder and twelve of his monks were driven out of their Abbey by the Scots. A single wagon drawn by eight oxen carried all the property they had been able to save, and they made their way into Yorkshire, where they were kindly welcomed by the youthful Roger de Mowbray and his mother, Gundreda the Bountiful.[1] The abbeys of the North Riding were repeatedly attacked and suffered great financial loss, not only from plunder but from the heavy cost of defence. In 1276 the property of Guisbrough Priory (excluding property in Scotland) was valued at 2000 marks; sixteen years later the Priory was heavily in debt owing to heavy losses sustained "from the heartbreaking plundering of the Scots and freebooters".[2] An inquiry made in 1326 showed that some land in this district had lost four-fifths of its former value, and about 1333 the Canons obtained special permission to sell some books of the Canon Law which they no longer needed, and to use the proceeds to pay their debts.

In October 1322, Robert Bruce raided the North Riding. He defeated the royal forces between Byland and Rievaulx Abbeys, nearly captured Edward II., who was dining with the Abbot of Byland, and laid waste the lands of both Abbeys.[3] Guisbrough Priory was put to the heavy expense of fortifying the Abbey buildings as a protection against the Scots, and the little

[1] *William of Newburgh*, i. 15.
[2] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, ii.
[3] *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, viii. 475.

Premonstratensian Abbey of Eggleston, already severely impoverished by Scottish raids, was utterly ruined by the cost of maintaining for a few days an English army which was marching against the Scots. These unwelcome visitors consumed in their short visit all the hay, corn, provisions and stores which had been gathered to supply the Abbey for a whole year. The Canons could no longer pay for the proper celebration of Divine service, and for a time were dependent for their food upon the charity of the faithful.[1]

Kings seize Monastic Property.

Some Kings did not scruple to seize the property of the religious houses. On the death of Lanfranc, "William Rufus oppressed the churches and monasteries of England with great affliction".[2] The wool of the Cistercians was seized to pay for the ransom of Richard I; Edward I. seized it to meet the cost of his wars with France; in 1337 Edward III. took from the Abbey of Meaux wool worth £15,000.[3] On the death of Abbot Peter, in 1211, King John seized the Abbey of Whitby, kept it vacant for three years and appropriated its revenues.[4] When Abbot Alexander of Meaux resisted John's demands for money, the King's soldiers seized the property of the Abbey and the monks were compelled to buy their food from them. Nothing could be taken into the Abbey or brought out of it without the consent of the King's servants who were posted at the gate.

[1] *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, xviii. 129.
[2] *Novae Leges Angliae*, R.S., i. 59.
[3] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 387.
[4] *Early History of the North Riding*, 182.

The monks were sentenced to pay a fine of a thousand marks for their opposition, and the payment proved so heavy a tax on their resources that the Abbey could no longer sustain them. In consequence they were dispersed among other houses or hospitably entertained by friends living near.

Cost of Entertainment.

The cost of entertainment sometimes proved a severe drain on the resources of the monks. In 1252, Henry III. stayed for three weeks, owing to illness, at Bury St. Edmunds Abbey—"to the great inconvenience of that house".[1] When Edward III. visited St. Swithin's Priory at Winchester in 1337 the monks gave gifts to the King's servants to the value of £300, in addition to the heavy cost of hospitality. Kings sometimes sent their old servants to a monastery to be maintained by the monastery for the rest of their lives; Edward I. sent one to Guisbrough Priory and ordered the Canons to "keep him in food and clothes as long as he lived". The arrogance of the King's officials sometimes impoverished monastic houses. When the town of Kingston-on-Hull was built on land belonging to Meaux Abbey, Edward I. sent a royal clerk to arrange for a grant of land in exchange for the site of the town. But the monks, who had already celebrated Mass, refused to hold a second celebration for the convenience of their visitor; he considered that he had not received the hospitality to which he was entitled, so he left the Abbey in a rage, reported that the lands the monks were to surrender were worth less than

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., v. 304.

they had represented and the monks suffered considerable loss in consequence.

Fires. Fires sometimes led to serious loss. In 1146 St. William was deposed from the Archbishopric of York and Henry Murdac, Abbot of Fountains, was elected as his successor. Some supporters of William therefore attacked Fountains Abbey and set fire to the church ; the marks of the fire are still visible. Glastonbury was destroyed by fire in 1184. Pershore Abbey was burned three times before 1288. On May 16, 1289, a "vile plumber" with two assistants had climbed on to the roof of the church of Guisbrough Priory to strengthen the old lead with new solder. The fire necessary for the work was kindled in iron ladles, which were placed on the dry wood of the roof. The plumber worked until after Mass and then descended, ordering his assistants to put out the fire, but they carelessly left the coal smouldering. A strong wind blew it into a flame, and scattered the fire over the roof. The wood caught fire, the lead was melted, the wooden cross-beams were ignited, and then "the fire waxed greatly and burned everything . . . and when the offenders, who had fled, were questioned, they could say nothing but 'What could I do?'"[1] A similar accident had led to the destruction of Croyland in 1091. Three lay brothers of Meaux became drunk and in consequence one of the Abbey granges was burned out, together with four hundred quarterns of corn.[2]

[1] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, ii. 353-357.
[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. xix.

Losses from Storm, bad Harvests and Floods.

The monks, the greatest farmers in England, suffered serious loss from bad harvests, from storm and flood. A succession of bad harvests and the payment of goods worth three hundred marks towards the ransom of Richard I. so impoverished the monks of Meaux that they could no longer maintain the Abbey and were entertained for fifteen months by other houses of the order.[1] On July 8, 1201, a great storm so damaged Waverley Abbey and its crops that the monks were compelled to leave their Abbey for a time and seek refuge in other Cistercian houses. The monks of Meaux lost about a hundred and fifty-seven acres in the great flood of 1393, when the River Hull broke its banks and submerged the surrounding country; they saved four acres that were imperilled, but the cost of repairing broken dams and flood-gates was heavy.[2] The Abbey lost on an average £250 a year owing to the inundation of the sea or river.[3]

The Black Death which devastated England in 1348 and 1349 inflicted great injury on the religious houses. In 1349 twenty monks and three lay brethren died in Newenham Abbey in Devon and altogether eighty people living in the Abbey buildings died of the pestilence. "Only Walter the Abbot and two monks were left alive." Very few monks of Meaux survived,[4] and a similar story may be told of practically every religious house.

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 233.
[2] *Ibid.* iii. xxvi.
[3] *Ibid.* viii.
[4] *Ibid.* xxxv.

Careless or fraudulent Administration.

Monastic finances were often impaired by careless administration or deliberate fraud. William of Dringhow, Abbot of Meaux, was deposed in 1352 for maladministration. He had tried to improve the financial position of the Abbey by selling wool and wheat in advance and had sold or leased property worth £620 : 6 : 8. His transactions proved unsuccessful; he increased the debt of the Abbey, which at his deposition owed £1003 : 3 : 11 and one hundred and ten sacks of wool which had been sold but not delivered.[1] In 1399, when Robert Lekynfield, the Bursar, went on a holiday, he took with him all the accounts of his office to hide the peculations of which he had been guilty.[2] A Prioress of Arden (North Riding) neglected to keep the Priory buildings in good repair, and pawned some vestments and the Priory seal.

Costs of Litigation.

The costs of the litigation in which the monks engaged were heavy, and were increased by the bribes they sometimes offered. Over a period of four years the Canons of Malton paid £114 in bribes to the sheriffs and bailiffs of Yorkshire, so it is reasonable to suppose that they gained some measure of success in the County Courts. The religious houses frequently borrowed money from the Jews and had to pay heavy interest for the accommodation. Considerable sums were spent on the entertainment of distinguished visitors, but the relief of the poor does not seem to have been a heavy burden, as the cost was often met by endowments left for this purpose by pious benefactors.

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., iii. xiii. [2] *Ibid.* 273.

Accounts of Whitby Abbey.

The accounts of Whitby Abbey afford interesting illustration of the financial position of the religious houses. During six months in 1296 the sale of wool produced £37 : 3s., of hides about £1 : 10s., of fish £2 : 13 : 8, of cattle nearly £27. In the same period the tithe of fish landed in the port and the proceeds from net money amounted to £52 : 13 : 11, and the spiritual income came to £20. The income for 1395 was £654 : 4 : $2\frac{1}{2}$, the expenditure was £664, and of this, £64 was paid for malt and about £19 for wine, while £17 : 7s. went in servants' wages. The revenue gradually declined and the total income for the year ending Whit Sunday 1461 was £329.[1]

Debts of Meaux Abbey.

The monks of Meaux seem to have been engaged in a continual struggle to reduce their debt, which was partly due to internal dissensions. In 1267 the debt amounted to £230; it rose to £1169 : 16 : 6 in 1310; stood at £1003 : 3 : 11 in 1352, and by 1376 had been reduced to £80 : 12 : $2\frac{1}{2}$. The monks were three times compelled to leave their monastery and seek shelter elsewhere owing to their poverty, and at one time the Abbey was so poor that the Abbot could not supply cloth to clothe the novices and gave them his own gown, although he retained his hood.[2] Matthew Paris[3] says that the Monastery at Canterbury and the Priories of Canterbury and Rochester were heavily burdened with debt. The Abbey of St. Albans became so impoverished that the monks burned their copes to

[1] *Early History of the North Riding*, 186.

[2] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., i. 107; iii. xxv. [3] iii. 346.

recover the gold which had been used in their manufacture.

It is obvious that, in spite of their wide domains and exclusive privileges, the religious houses were often in great financial straits. Their revenues were large, but their expenditure was so heavy, even in peaceful and prosperous years, that a serious fire, a Scottish raid or a bad harvest reduced them to poverty.

Discipline

Punishment for breaches of the Rule might be inflicted by the head of the house after due trial of offenders in the chapter-house ; it might also be imposed by the visitor for faults discovered during an official visitation.

Chapter Meetings.

A meeting of the Chapter was held in every religious house after Prime had been celebrated. After a portion of the Rule of St. Benedict had been read, cases of misconduct were investigated. Offenders guilty of minor offences, such as talking, were flogged in the presence of the Chapter, deprived of food (save bread and water), or required to say additional prayers. For more serious offences, theft, murder, perjury and the like, they were committed to "the firm and strong prison" which the Cistercian Rule prescribed as a necessary part of every abbey. Hardened sinners were expelled from their own house and sent to do penance at another of the same order. When the Canons of Bridlington found that they could not keep Brother Simon le Constable in order, they sent him to Guis-

brough Priory. He was forbidden to go outside the Priory, to send or receive letters or to speak to any secular person save in the presence of the Prior. He had to recite every day a portion of the Psalter, to confess once a week, to say every Friday the seven penitential Psalms with humility and reverence, and to receive in secret from the Prior a flogging [1] on certain days. Unfortunately, we are not told if these severe measures led the erring brother to mend his ways.

Visitations.

Most religious houses were subject to the visitation of the local bishop or archbishop, but the Cistercians and Premonstratensians visited their own houses and were exempt from episcopal supervision. Due notice was given of an impending visitation, and the bishop concerned might visit in person or through a representative. The visitor examined individually each inmate from the abbot downwards ; notes of the evidence were taken by his clerk, and on these he based his report.

Visitors sometimes showed considerable harshness in their investigations. Those who visited St. Augustine's Abbey at Canterbury in 1232 acted " with undue severity . . . and so terrified the monks " that they successfully appealed to the Pope and induced him to nominate other visitors.[2]

Breaches of the Rule.

The reports of the visitors showed that the Rule of the house had often been broken. Many disclose breaches of the vow of chastity. Bishop Wickes reported [3] that the Prior of

[1] *Unam disciplinam.* [2] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., iii. 239.
[3] Bishop Wickes' Visitation.

Walsingham was on familiar terms with the wife of John Smith, one of his own servants. "The Prior blabbeth to Smith's wife all that is done in the chapter-house"; she "keepeth the keys of the malt and corn chamber"; "she is called the Prior's lady", and "rode to Canterbury on the Prior's horse". As a reward for his connivance Smith was enriched with property of the Priory, and was reputed to be worth five hundred marks.[1] The heads of the little nunneries of Arden and Marrick in the North Riding were found guilty of the same sin.

Matthew Paris [2] tells of one Abbot Walsig, who lived in the time of King Alfred and was excessively fond of hunting, wore silk clothes, invited ladies to his feasts and died of drink. Walsig was "rightly called *pessimus*". But his successor was "*pejus priore*", says the pious chronicler, whose indignation proved too much for his grammar.

Walter Giffard, Archbishop of York, visited Guisbrough Priory in person. In his report he ordered the Canons to observe the Rule of St. Augustine more strictly. He forbade them to go out of the Priory after Compline "for the sake of drinking", or by a pretence of illness to gain admission to the infirmary; he ordered all members of the choir to join in the singing; he bade all the brethren keep silence in the cloister, and warned them not to listen to improper stories.[3]

Bishop Wickes reported that two Canons of

[1] *I.e.* about £3000 of modern money. [2] i. viii.
[3] *Guisbrough Chartulary*, ii. xiv.

Walsingham " are frequently hunting and hawking ; . . . they climb the walls by night to go in and out, . . . they sit up all night drinking and rise not to Matins ".

In order that they might avoid the temptations of the outside world, monks were forbidden to leave their monastery without special permission, and the Abbot of Meaux warned the monks who went to serve a neighbouring chantry, that they were not to enter a tavern or attend a public show.[1]

But nuns and monks repeatedly left their monasteries in spite of stringent rules to the contrary, and the practice became so common that the Pope issued a Special Bull in 1300 to forbid it. But when the Bishop of Lincoln tried to enforce the Bull in a local nunnery the nuns threw it at him and vowed they would not observe it.[2] We cannot help feeling some sympathy for Brother Ralph of Titchfield, who was accused of leaving his dormitory at night to catch fish in the neighbouring lake.

Contrary to his vow of poverty, the Prior of Walsingham owned a thousand sheep and he was believed to possess two thousand marks in coined money.

Some monks showed a strong leaning towards a secular life. Higden[3] says that in Lanfranc's time " the monks of Canterbury and nearly all monks in England lived like laymen, except that they were more chaste. They were wont to hunt, hawk, play at dice and drink deep ", and

[1] *Meaux Chronicle*, R.S., ii. 200. [2] *Mediaeval People*, 81.
[3] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 339.

the number of their servants suggested that they "were consuls rather than monks". In a Council held in London in 1342, monks were reproached for wearing clothes "fit rather for knights than clerks", and in another Council held at York five years later complaints were made that their clothing was too short.[1]

Some of the faults condemned by visitors do not seem heinous. The nuns of Wykeham and Yeddingham (in the North Riding) were forbidden to wear conspicuous habits and girdles; those of Arden and Rosedale were not to allow dogs to enter the nunnery, in the first case because of the cost of their keep,[2] in the second because puppies interfered with the church service.

General

The reports of visitations, the evidence of chroniclers, the criticism of such satirists as Mapes and Piers Plowman paint the life of the religious houses in black colours[3] and there is no doubt that many monks were anything but a credit to their order.

But there was another side to the picture. The reports of visitors dealt with faults, they rarely commended the virtues that their visitations revealed. Satirists are prone to exaggerate and while the evil deeds of monks live after them,

> The good is oft interred with their bones.

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[1] *Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, 115.

[2] *Yorks. Arch. Reg.*, Greenfield, i. 86*b*.

[3] For similar criticisms by French writers, see Langlois, *Vie en France au moyen âge*, i. 73-81, 156, 327, 337-340.

The monks undoubtedly rendered great economic services to their times, they promoted the cause of learning, they dispensed lavish hospitality. Although some abbots were great sinners, others were great saints. William, first Abbot of Rievaulx, was justly called "the Blessed William"; his successor Ælred did splendid work as an abbot and a historian, in spite of continual bodily pain, which he bore with exemplary patience. Abbot Sampson of Bury St. Edmunds, who died in 1212, "made an aqueduct and rendered many other services to his church"[1] and earned the profound respect of his monks. The Prior of Walsingham[2] was not a fair example of the head of a house.

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 533. [2] Page 268.

CHAPTER XI

THE PARISH

Monasteries exercised great influence on the lives of the people of the neighbourhood; the sermons of the friars attracted large audiences; but the Parish Churches, their spiritual homes, affected people more than religious houses or wandering preachers.

The parish was the township in its ecclesiastical form;[1] it was served by a beneficed priest who was charged with the spiritual oversight of the population, who paid to him ecclesiastical dues and, generally, tithes: its boundaries usually coincided with those of the township. It formed also the administrative unit of the bishopric. The parish was under the immediate supervision of the rural dean, who reported to the bishop or to the archdeacon, the bishop's deputy, any faults sufficiently serious to merit trial in their ecclesiastical courts.

The incumbent discharged all spiritual duties, but the men of the townsfolk constituted the parish, or, as it was termed later, the parish meeting, which enjoyed the right of self-governance in other matters. The parish meeting

[1] Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, i. 91.

elected officials such as the parish clerk, the grave-digger and the crucifer, who carried the Cross in processions. It was responsible for all parish property, including in many cases not only vestments and sacred vessels, but also plate, land and houses. Local craftsmen built and repaired their own church—the blacksmith forged the ironwork, the masons reared the fabric, the carpenter carved the woodwork. The duty of attendance at church was acknowledged, though not practised, by all. Population was reckoned by the number of "houseling folk", that is, the townsfolk of both sexes above the age of fourteen who took the Holy Communion.[1] About 1460, Sheffield had two thousand "houseling folk", and Beverley five thousand.[2]

The Parish Church [3]

In Saxon times, churches were usually built of timber. "There was a time", said Bede, "when there was not a stone church in all the land, but the custom was to build them all of wood." The nave of the Saxon church which was built at Greenstead in Essex about 1013 is the only one of those early churches which still survives. The outer wall consists of upright trunks of trees, the tops of which were cut into wedges which fitted into grooves in the roof-tree, while the bottoms were morticed into the sill. The sides of the

[1] Husel or housel.

[2] *Cambridge Anthologies: The Middle Ages*, ii.

[3] Students specially interested in this subject are advised to read Dr. Hamilton Thompson's *The Historical Growth of the English Church*, and *The Ground Plan of the English Church*.

trunks are grooved and timbers, cut to fit the grooves, have been inserted in order to keep out rain and snow.[1]

By the end of the Saxon period churches were built of stone and of these examples remain at Bradford-on-Avon, Wareham, and Deerhurst in Gloucestershire, while at Earl's Barton in Northamptonshire and St. Michael's at Oxford later naves have been added to Saxon towers. The tower at Earl's Barton admirably illustrates important features of Anglo-Saxon architecture ; the corners are built up of long and short work, in which long stones set upright alternate with others laid horizontally ; pilaster strips of stone imitate the construction of older wooden churches and afford an admirable illustration of " stone carpentry ", while the windows are intersected by " baluster shafts " or small pillars swelling in the middle.

Early Norman kings looked with special favour on the monastic houses, partly because the monastic system was the ecclesiastical counterpart of the feudal. For a time the influence of the parochial clergy was overshadowed, but even in the beginning of the Norman period parish churches received some support from the rich, and many were built between 1120 and 1150. Gradually the parish churches regained some of the influence they had exercised before the Norman Conquest, and the development of architecture made the parish churches more and more beautiful.

About 1170 the axe, hitherto the chief tool of

[1] *A School History of Essex*, Weston, Clarendon Press, 72.

the builders, was replaced by the chisel, and this made possible the more graceful mouldings which partly distinguish the Early English from the Norman style. Light lancet windows replaced the heavier Norman arches and the gradual use of tracery added to the effect.

Large windows divided by mullions, cusps and the use of the ball flower ornament mark the Decorated style which prevailed from 1272 to 1377 and during this period the parish church became an element of greater importance in the life of the district.

In the Perpendicular architecture which was the prevailing style of the fifteenth century, the graceful flowing lines of the Decorated tracery were replaced by the " rigid lines of the mullions, which are carried through to the architrave mouldings, the spaces between being frequently divided and subdivided by similar perpendicular lines ",[1] and the walls were covered with panelling of the same kind.

Builders often made use of older material. In some churches Roman tiles have been incorporated into later structures. The Normans sometimes built into the walls of their churches Anglian or Danish sculpture. The longest Anglo-Saxon inscription which remains in England is to be seen in Kirkdale Church in the North Riding, where a slab commemorating the restoration of the church about 1060 has been built over the mediaeval south door.

Development.

The development of the parish church proceeded on several lines. With the growth of

[1] *Introduction to Gothic Architecture*, Parker, 195.

population and the need of providing more altars owing to the increase in the number of Masses, the parish churches of Norman times became too small to accommodate the congregation. Further accommodation was provided by lengthening the church, widening the nave by the addition of aisles, increasing the size of the chancel or adding chantry chapels. New churches were larger than the old, and such great Perpendicular churches as St. Mary Redcliffe (Bristol), St. Lawrence (Ludlow) and St. Michael's and Trinity (Coventry), are almost as large as cathedrals.

An important effect of the development of architecture was the increase in the size of windows as compared with wall space. Stained windows became larger and wall paintings smaller. The additional light and height made the church brighter and more spacious, gave full effect to the splendid colouring which adorned the interior, and showed up clearly the magnificent brasses, a special feature of the thirteenth century, and the wonderful work of cunning workers in wood and stone.

Parish churches were very numerous; all classes united in the good work of building them. Charlemagne is said to have founded as many churches as there are letters in the alphabet and in each church he fastened a letter of gold weighing "one hundred pounds of Touronese".[1] "God knows", commented John of Trevisa, who translated Higden, "what that may be." The arms of the local nobles or merchants who founded

[1] Higden, *Polychronicon*, R.S., vi. 259. But the *livre tournois*, *i.e.* according to the scale of weights at Tours, was a well-known mediaeval standard of value.

them may still be seen on the walls of many of our churches. Winchester in 1291 had no less than forty-seven parish churches and three chapels.[1]

The Interior of the Parish Church

In early times the western door was apparently the main entrance, but later the worshippers entered by the south door. The font was placed near the entrance, and was usually kept locked to prevent the people from using the water for superstitious practices. The fiends who were expelled from the child's body by the sacred rite of baptism were supposed to flee through the north door, which was often called the "Devil's Door".

The south door was often protected by a porch, built to shelter worshippers who were waiting to enter the building. It contained a holy water stoup in order that the congregation might sprinkle themselves before entering the church. An upper storey [2] was sometimes built over the porch. It often contained a fireplace and was used sometimes as a bedroom for the sexton, sometimes for the accommodation of the priest in charge or of any priest who came from a distance to conduct the service, and sometimes as a chapel. The Porch.

In cruciform churches the tower was often built over the centre of the church, but as a Towers.

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 426.

[2] This is sometimes called a "Parvise" or "Paradisus", but a Parvise is strictly the space in front of the church, *e.g.* the Parvise Nôtre Dame at Paris. The term was also applied to the porch, but its application to the upper chamber is inaccurate. (Prof. A. Hamilton Thompson.)

general rule the tower was placed at the west end of the nave. Early towers are usually small, but after the western door was closed, more attention was paid to the tower, especially in the thirteenth century. Early English towers are taller than Norman, and are usually crowned with a spire. Perpendicular towers, of which many splendid examples are found in Somersetshire, are richly ornamented, and are surmounted by open parapets adorned with pinnacles and corner turrets.

The Nave. The nave of the church was the property of the parish; fees for burial in the nave were payable to the churchwardens, not, as in the case of the chancel and churchyard, to the rector; the duty of keeping the fabric in good order rested with the parishioners. The parishioners would gather the rushes with which the floor was sometimes strewed, and this old custom is still maintained at the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe on Whit Sunday, when the Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Bristol attend in state. The poorer folk of Ingleby Arncliffe, in the North Riding, picked the moss with which the roof was packed in the winter; such humble duties, faithfully rendered, were an acceptable sacrifice.

In many small churches the nave had no aisles. The demand for more accommodation was partly met by adding aisles to the nave. The aisle was often built outside the wall; after it was completed, the masonry between the pillars was removed and the outer wall of the aisle became the outer wall of the church. Aisles provided more room for worshippers, facilitated processions,

and frequently contained the smaller altars of the church, one of which was placed at the eastern end.

Seats were rarely provided; the congregation stood or sat on the floor, a few finding a seat on the bases of the pillars. When Louis IX. and Joinville were attending church, the King, placing his hand on the earth, said to his faithful seneschal, "Sit here near me, that no one may hear us". In a few cases, such as Middleton in the North Riding, low stone seats were built along the wall for the convenience of worshippers. Later the congregation sat on stools, which in time were replaced by pews.

The parish coffin, which was used to carry to the grave the bodies of the poorest parishioners, was kept in the nave; and the fact that such coffins were distinctly smaller than those in use to-day shows that the stature of the people has increased. The chests which contained parochial documents and accounts are still preserved in many modern churches, but the whips which were used to drive out intruding dogs, and the long hooks which were used to pull down burning houses are no longer kept in our parish churches.[1]

The Chancel.

The chancel was the freehold of the rector. When a church was appropriated to a religious house, the latter, as rector, was liable for the maintenance of the chancel. But this duty was sometimes neglected and the burden fell upon the parishioners, who, though sincerely devoted to their church, naturally resented an arrange-

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 34.

ment which diverted most of its income to an institution which bore little, if any, of the cost of upkeep.

The chancel was generally narrower than the nave. In many cases the two are out of alignment, and it has been suggested that where the chancel inclines to the north the arrangement was made to remind worshippers that as Our

Copyright W. A. Call, Monmouth

ROOD SCREEN

Patrishow Church

Lord hung on the Cross, His head inclined towards His right shoulder. Dr. Hamilton Thompson [1] thinks that the error of line was due simply to the carelessness of the masons who built a new chancel on to an old nave, or to difficulties of site which led to divergence of axis in different parts of the building.

A stone piscina for washing the sacred vessels

[1] *The Ground Plan of the English Church*, 133.

was usually built into the wall of the chancel, and emptied by a pipe draining into the churchyard. Sedilia were often provided for the officiating clergy.

Above the chancel the rood-loft was built and

Dr. J. L. Kirk

LOW SIDE WINDOW

Thornton-le-Dale Church

on it stood the Great Rood. Very few rood-lofts yet remain, but the beam that supported the rood and the steps that once led to the rood-loft may still be seen in some parish churches.

A small door for the use of priests was some-

times built into the south wall of the chancel, and in the same wall are found the "low side" windows, the exact purpose of which cannot be determined. The theory that they were built to enable lepers to see the celebration of Mass at the High Altar must be rejected, for lepers were compelled to keep far away from their fellows. It is not likely, as has been suggested, that they were constructed to enable a bellringer in the churchyard to see when the Host was elevated, so that he could ring his bell to inform villagers of the fact; the bell was rung from inside the church. Another—not more probable—explanation is that lanterns were hung in "low side" windows to keep away the evil spirits who appealed so vividly to the imagination of men in the Middle Ages.

During Easter an "Easter Sepulchre" was constructed, and in this the Host was kept during the Festival. Most of these were temporary wooden structures, but in a few cases recesses, constructed in the wall of the nave or chancel, appear to have been permanent Easter Sepulchres.

Chapels. Chapels, which might be built in any part of the church, often increased its size and led to divergence from the original plan. Chapels were often termed chantries; although a chantry was, literally, a special service chanted by a priest, the term came to denote the building in which the service was held. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the piety of the wealthy nobles had led to the foundation of religious houses. From 1300 to 1500 the growth of trade had caused

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EASTER SEPULCHRE

Haklington Church

a considerable increase in the wealth of the middle classes; pious merchants often used the profits of business to found a chantry in their parish church, and the gentry of the time joined in the good work. Such chantries were founded to "pray for the souls" of the founder and his relatives. In 1337, William de Brus of Pickering received a licence "in consideration of one messuage and two bovates of land in the village of Middleton, near Pickering, for a certain chaplain to celebrate divine mysteries daily in the church of God, St. Peter and St. Paul, Pickering, for the souls of the masters, William and Robert of Pickering, Adam de Brus and Matilda his wife".[1]

In many parishes religious guilds were established, such as the Palmers' Guild at Ludlow; the Guilds of St. Mary at Stamford, Cambridge, Louth and Chipping Sodbury; the Guild of the Holy Cross at Birmingham and Abingdon; the Guild of the Holy Trinity at Spalding, Nottingham and Luton. The chapel of the famous Guild of the Holy Cross at Stratford-on-Avon became the grammar school in which Shakespeare was educated. Such guilds rendered valuable services to the parish church, and often endowed altars and founded chantries.

Holy Trinity Church, Coventry, had eight chapels—those of St. Thomas, Our Lady, Jesus, Corpus Christi and Holy Trinity, which were founded by religious guilds, and those of the

[1] *The Evolution of an English Town*, Home, J. M. Dent and Sons, 130.

Mercers, Tanners and Butchers, which were due to the devotion of local tradesmen.[1]

In large parishes, and particularly in the moorland parishes of Yorkshire, outlying chapels, dependent on the parish church, were built for the convenience of travellers or of local people who were prevented by distance, bad roads or floods from attending the parish church. In 1233, Pope Gregory IX. authorised Archbishop Gray of York to build chapels and chantries at distances varying from a quarter of a mile to four miles from the parish church. The priest celebrated Mass in Pockley Church whenever the people could not get to Helmsley Church " for the great inundance of waters ". The chantry of Our Lady at Boroughbridge was built for the safety of the souls of the founders and also " for the ease of strangers repairing through the same, being one thoroughfare town of the King's Street leading from London to Carlisle and Berwick ".[2]

The larger chantries were served by a number of priests and these were often formed into colleges. One of the largest of these chantry colleges was founded at Fotheringhay, and included a master, twelve chaplains, eight clerks and thirteen choristers. At Kirkleatham, in the North Riding, the college was composed of twelve chaplains and four clerks who, unlike the priests of most endowed chantries, were subject to the authority of the rector. They lived in the rectory and took their meals at the rector's table.

[1] *The Historical Growth of the English Parish Church*, 47.
[2] *Early History of the North Riding*, 195.

He gave them each year twenty shillings, a robe of six ells of cloth, twelve quarters of coal and twenty pounds of candles. Two flagons of the best ale were supplied to them in their chambers from All Saints to Candlemas.[1]

Churches were coloured.

Old churches were full of colour. The stained-glass windows contained pictures of scenes from the Scriptures or lives of Saints ; Jesse windows showed the descent of Christ from Adam, while others commemorated the deeds of local magnates. The walls were covered with paintings designed to instruct the unlearned, and wall paintings have been called " The Poor Man's Bible ". The Last Judgment was portrayed in a most convincing manner, and this picture was often painted over the chancel arch ; an excellent example may still be seen in the Church of St. Thomas Becket at Salisbury. The old paintings which remain on the walls of the chancel of Easby Church, in the North Riding, represent the Creation, Expulsion from Paradise, Adoration of the Kings, Descent from the Cross, Entombment and Resurrection. The paintings in Pickering Church date from about 1450, and deal with more varied subjects. They give the story of Adam and Eve, scenes from the life of Christ, and a vivid representation of Herod's feast ; St. Catherine is seen undergoing the tortures of the wheel, St. Christopher carries the infant Christ, fourteen arrows have pierced the body of St. Edmund, and the four knights who are about to slay Becket wear the armour that belonged to a later period than their own.

[1] *Early History of the North Riding*, 195.

Traces of non-pictorial designs, such as diaper work and plain colour, are often found, and the general effect of painted walls, windows and tombs gave to mediaeval churches a richness which is rarely found in modern ones.

The Secular Use of Churches

The parish church tended to become the centre of parish life, and was used for secular as well as sacred purposes.

Defence. In many places, and particularly on the borders which were exposed to Welsh or Scottish raids, the parish church became a place of refuge in time of need. Country churches in the North of England were often, like Durham Cathedral,

> Half-house of God, half-castle 'gainst the Scot.

The tower was sometimes fortified ; at Bedale in Wensleydale the entrance to the tower was protected by a portcullis, and in one of the four storeys there still remains an old room which was furnished with a fireplace and garde-robe for the convenience of the garrison. The towers of the churches at Llanfihangel-Cwm-Du in Breconshire and Llanfair-ar-y-Bryn in Caermarthenshire were obviously built for use in time of war.

Arms were sometimes stored in the parish church, and in Pickering Church deep grooves in the ribs of the old armoury show where weapons were sharpened in the Middle Ages. The stones of the porches of many North Riding churches, and particularly Northallerton and Osmotherley, are scored deep with the marks

WALL PAINTING OF HEROD'S FEAST — Dr. J. L. Kirk

It is composed of three pictures. On the right, Salome is seen performing a "Tumble" dance before Herod, his queen, and two guests, while St. John the Baptist is holding up a warning hand; in the centre, Salome has the head of St. John in a charger, and on the left the execution is shown.

Pickering Church

made perhaps by local archers who sharpened their arrows on the stonework before they went to fight the Scots, because they thought that such arrows would be more effective than those that had been sharpened on a secular grindstone. But it is more probable that these grooves were made by people who shot on Sunday at butts situated in or near the churchyard. The mullions in the chancel window at Oxhill in Warwickshire are deeply indented with similar marks made, possibly, by English archers before they set out to fight under the Black Prince at Crécy and Poitiers.

Trade.

In the early Middle Ages fairs were often held on Sunday in the churchyards. Fairs afforded to local craftsmen an easy means of exchanging their goods, but churchyards suffered serious damage and the fun of the fair became too pronounced. As early as 1236 the King forbade merchandise to be sold in the church or churchyard of All Saints' Church at Northampton during the time of the fair, and ordered archdeacons to see that no goods were exposed for sale in sacred places.[1] In 1285 a law was passed which forbade fairs any longer to be held in churchyards.

Local trade guilds attended their guild chapels not only for worship but to transact business, and the annual meeting of the guild seems generally to have been held in the chapel. At Cirencester the third storey of the church porch was the regular meeting-place of one of the local guilds, and it is still used as the Guildhall of the town.

[1] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 71.

Merchants or pedlars[1] drove many a hard bargain as they waited in the south porch, and so common was this practice that the porch was often enlarged to give them adequate protection from bad weather. Churches were sometimes used as barns, or stores for goods; wool was stored in a church at Southampton. We hear of a Devonshire priest who brewed his beer in his church.

Various Uses.

Churches were sometimes used for schools or for the sale of books, and the porch of St. Peter's, Sandwich, seems to have been used for both these purposes. When the competitors for the crown of Scotland came to see Edward I. he received them in the parish church at Norham.[2]

Parish Business.

Much of the business of the town was transacted in the parish church. It was used for the election of mayors, for the audit of accounts, for the hire of soldiers. The King's Courts sometimes met in it and in 1462 the royal judges tried prisoners accused of theft in the Grey Friars' Church at Bridgewater,[3] while the porch of St. Peter's Church, Sandwich, was used for the same purpose.[4]

Law cases were sometimes tried while Mass was being performed. St. Louis of France was specially praised because he did this very seldom, and the custom was so general in England that Pope John XXII. specially appealed to Edward II. to stop it.

[1] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 76. [2] *Ibid.* 76.
[3] *Town Life in the Middle Ages*, i. 155.
[4] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 76.

The church was the social centre of the parish ; those who nominally came to pray remained for other purposes. Churches were regular meeting-places for lovers, whose conversation seriously disturbed the service. Lovers were not the only offenders. Women seemed to have used the church services as occasions for general talk. Gilles le Muisis [1] complains that "during the Mass the assistant clergy do nothing but chatter . . . the women do the same, it is at church that they hold their talks about their neighbours, their neighbours' wives, and their servants". The subjects of conversation vary little from age to age. Social Centres.

Games were sometimes played in churches and churchyards, and a contemporary pamphlet [2] mentions dancing, quoiting, bull-baiting, playing at tennis, hand ball, football, stool ball, and "all manner of other games". In the thirteenth century, Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, a determined opponent of ecclesiastical abuses, had ordered that all games should be excluded from churches and churchyards, on pain of ecclesiastical censure.[3] A Council held in London in 1341 and another held in York in 1367 protested against the practice and denounced "those guilty of games and follies, which transform a house of tears and prayers into a house of laughing and excess". But the practice continued in spite of the opposition of the Church.

Churchyard games were as strenuous as those played on unhallowed ground. Apparently they

[1] Langlois, i. 332.

[2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 11.

[3] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 74.

were conducted on the well-known principle of "win, tie or wrangle". They often led to fighting, frequently to bloodshed and sometimes to loss of life.

Giraldus Cambrensis [1] tells of some Worcestershire folk who danced in the churchyard and sang the refrain "Sweetheart, have pity" with such gusto that the priest could not get it out of his head; next day when he should have said "Dominus vobiscum" in church, he startled those of his congregation who were listening by saying "Sweetheart, have pity". But transgression did not always escape unpunished.[2] Higden tells how fifteen men and three women were dancing in the churchyard of St. Magnus in a Saxon town. The priest prayed that they might continue dancing for a whole year. His prayer was answered. They went on dancing, without ceasing, drinking or sleeping, even when "they were drowned in snow to the middle of their body". The brother of one of the women seized her arm and tried to pull her away; the arm came off in his hand, but she continued dancing. They were finally freed from their punishment by the prayers of an Archbishop of Cologne.

Dances and games were often held in churchyards or churches on the night preceding a funeral, during the "Lychwake" when the corpse was "watched" before burial. Debauchery and riot frequently followed; much beer was consumed; some of the mourners played

[1] Quoted *Mediaeval People*, 14.
[2] *Polychronicon*, R.S., vii. 13.

cards or acted plays; women sang songs which were anything but appropriate to the occasion.[1] It was in vain that Grosseteste[2] ordered that vigils for the dead must not be profaned by scurrility, that funeral feasts must not be made an occasion for merry-making. While he held that "holy days should be wholly spent in Divine service and holy works which are of immediate use for the salvation of souls", he also asserted that it was far less wicked for women to sew and spin and for men to plough on holy days than to play games, however innocent: for works of necessity are better than worldly pleasures.

Churchyards were often the scenes of riots and disorder, and so serious were the crimes committed in St. Paul's Churchyard, London, that in 1285 it was enclosed by a stone wall "to the honour of God and of the said church, as also of the holy persons whose bodies lie at rest in the same".[3] About 1300 the closes at Hereford, Lincoln, Lichfield and Wells were walled in to keep out malefactors.

Opinions were divided as to the introduction of hawks into church. John Guler, the official preacher of Strasburg Cathedral, complained "that some men, when they are about to enter a church equip themselves like hunters, bearing hawks and bells on their wrists, and followed by a pack of baying hounds, that trouble God's service".[4] Pope Clement V. issued a Bull which forbade the practice, but The Goodman of Paris

[1] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 90. [2] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 74.
[3] *Mon. Guild*, ii. cvii.
[4] *Life in the Middle Ages*, Coulton, iii. 154.

urged people to bring their hawks into church so that they might become accustomed to crowds.

Scotales. Scotales or Church Ales have been compared to the parochial tea meetings or bazaars of to-day; Dr. Coulton [1] states that they were meals taken by the people before service. The meal was served either in the church or the church-house, in which better accommodation for cooking and brewing was provided. Sometimes a wealthy parishioner would give a bullock or a sheep for the feast; sometimes the priest provided the beer, which he sold to the company for the benefit of the church. These gatherings frequently degenerated into vulgar carousals, marked by excess in eating and drinking. In 1325, Archbishop Reynolds denounced "certain sons of gluttony and drunkenness whose god is their belly", who "hastily swallow the Lord's body at Easter and then sit down in the church itself to eat and drink as if they were in a tavern".

Conduct in Church

The general conduct of worshippers was often irreverent. The congregation was bidden not to jest in church or to loll against the pillars, but to kneel reverently on the floor.[2] But in spite of the entreaty of the pious priest, the Mass was disturbed by a buzz of conversation, by the noise of people moving about the church and by occasional brawls.

The church floor was used as a spittoon. Fra

[1] *Mediaeval Studies: Parish Life in England*, 13.
[2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., ix.

Salimbene[1] bids the congregation refrain from spitting until the priest has come to the end of a chapter or a period in his sermon; he records, with evident approval, the story of Flamenca, a dainty lady of Provence, who gave her love the pleasure of seeing her face when she lowered her wimple so that she might spit in the church porch. We can easily understand why St. Francis, as he moved from place to place, carried a broom to sweep out dirty churches,[2] and why people believed that, owing to the way churches were profaned, thunderbolts fell more often on churches than on taverns.

Robert of Brunne, in his *Handyling Synne*, written about 1303,[3] complained that owing to late suppers rich men refuse to answer the summons of the church bell on Sunday morning and

take the mery mornyng slepe.

Rich men were not the only offenders. One John Johnson, a shoemaker, was tried in an ecclesiastical court, because he "keepeth his bed upon the Sunday and other holy days at times of matins and mass, as it were a hound should keep his kennel".[4]

In spite of the uncomfortable arrangements of mediaeval churches, which compare most unfavourably with the well-padded pews of to-day, many who did go to church were able to sleep during service. His biographer commends

[1] *St. Francis to Dante*, 69.
[2] *A Mirror of Perfection*, 56.
[3] *Hymn to the Virgin*, E.E.T.S., xi.
[4] *Mediaeval England*, 412.

Joachim de Flora because he very rarely slept, " especially in church ".

Disorder sometimes arose owing to social differences. The lord of the manor was a man of so high a position that the service did not start until he was in his pew. If he came late, the congregation made the most of the opportunity for conversation which his late arrival provided. The Host was passed from one worshipper to another in order of social precedence and many objected when they saw that others were preferred before them. In 1496 a woman was tried in a Bishop's Court for angrily throwing the Host on to the floor because another had kissed it before her.[1] Processions sometimes were disturbed because people thought that they were not duly placed according to their rank, and they were bidden not to seek precedence over others, for such attempts dishonoured the church by causing quarrels and even bloodshed. If processions from different parishes met as they passed along the road, local rivalry often led to free fights.

Church Endowments

Churches benefited greatly by the generosity of the faithful who, as the formula ran, made gifts " to God and the Church of . . . ". Sometimes a symbolic act testified to gifts which could not be actually handed over; the Earl of Chester placed his gloves on the altar of St. Peter's Church, Chester, as a symbol of the land he proposed to bestow.[2]

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 425. [2] *Norman Conquest*, iv. 499.

Carrying a Corpse to Burial. Devils Punishing a Sinner.
Works of Mercy

Victoria and Albert Museum

Godfrey Bingley

THE MARMION TOMB, TANFIELD CHURCH

Showing Herse

Practically every parish church had received endowments of land and houses, some possessed herds of cattle or sheep. Many possessed valuable plate; in 1523 the Church of St. Lawrence at Reading had more than seven hundred ounces; in 1529 the Parish Church of Long Melford in Suffolk had nine hundred ounces;[1] St. Mary's Church, Sandwich, had seven hundred and twenty-four ounces.[2] Part of the ransom of Richard I. was raised by the compulsory sale of the chalices belonging to parish churches.[3]

The parish priest comforted his parishioners in their dying hours, and death-bed repentance, combined with the persuasive tongue of the priest, led many to leave legacies to their parish church, to make due provision of wax candles for their funeral and of food and drink for the burial feast. Legacies of money, jewellery and clothing were very common; widows sometimes bequeathed their wedding rings and poor folk left lamps, candlesticks, honey or wax. John Wawan, a burgess of Scarborough, who lived at the end of the fourteenth century, left twenty shillings to the parish church and directed that twenty-five pounds of wax should be burned round his body; John Barker of Thirsk deemed four pounds of wax sufficient, and left twelve pence to the Church of St. James and the same amount to the priest.

The burial feast was an important institution. In 1453 a Middlesbrough man ordered that an ox, a quarter of wheat and a quarter of barley

[1] *The Great Pillage*, 58.
[2] *Town Life in the Middle Ages*, ii. 75.
[3] *Reis de Brittanie*, R.S., 261.

(for brewing beer) should be provided for this occasion; and in 1439 a Yorkshire "pannierman", or driver of pack horses, left for the same purpose a calf, two sheep, half a quarter of wheat and three pecks of barley.[1]

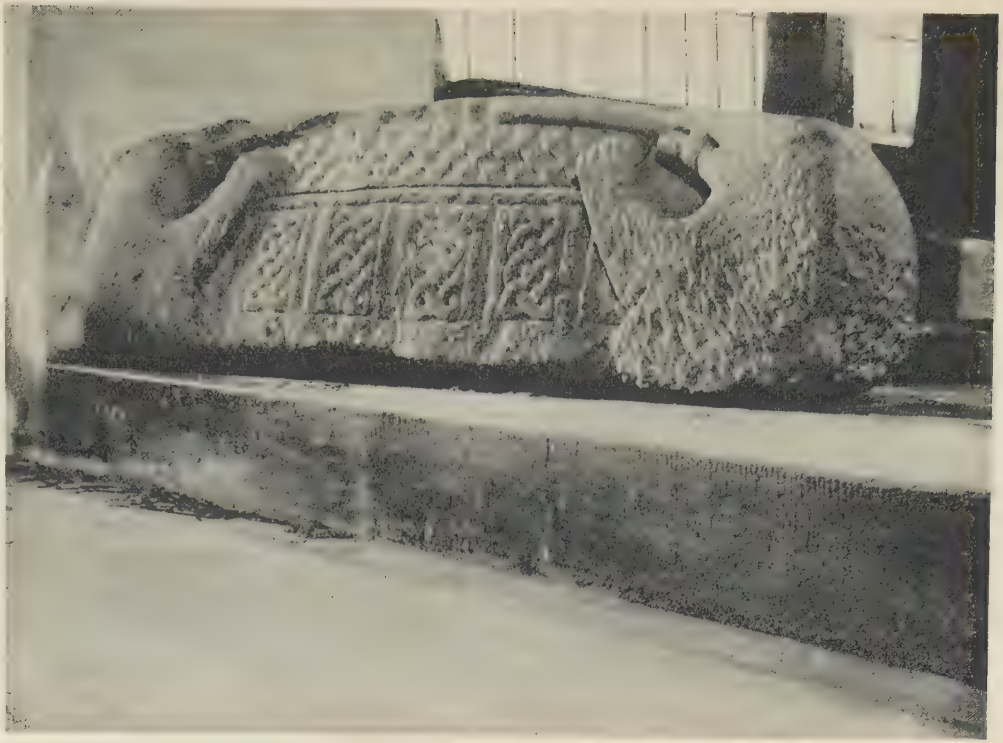
Burial

The privilege of burial in the parish church was greatly valued and special instructions were often given in a will for the burial of the testator. The church and often the exact place of the tomb were specified. William Pallister of Sand Hutton, in his will of September 1469, directed that his body should be buried "in the Church of Our Lady at Threske,[2] before the rood, where his mother lyeth".

Every parish church contains monuments, of varying degrees of artistic merit, which commemorate the leading families of the district. The Beauchamp tombs in St. Mary's Church, Warwick, the Fitz Alan tombs at Arundel, the Marmion tombs in Tanfield Church are typical examples. One of the Marmion[3] tombs is still surmounted by the "herse", an iron frame on which candles were stuck, which was often placed above tombs in the Middle Ages.

The hogbacks which are found in some parts of England which the Danes occupied, and particularly in the North Riding, were probably the gravestones of the leading men of the neighbourhood. As the name implies, they are shaped

[1] *The Early History of the North Riding*, 199.
[2] Thirsk. [3] Page 301.



DANISH HOGBACK, BROMPTON

G. E. Taylor

G. E. Taylor

PRIEST'S TOMBSTONE FROM KIRKLEVINGTON

Showing Chalices

like a hog; at each end is a muzzled bear; the top is often carved to imitate the tiles of a roof. Some authorities consider that hogbacks were intended as habitations for the spirits of the dead, and made like contemporary houses, which were built of wood or wattle and roofed with tiles.

The names of the humbler folk who were buried in the parish church have long been forgotten, but an indication of their sex or calling is sometimes carved on their gravestones. A sword is a male emblem and not necessarily the sign of a soldier; shears represent a woman. A hammer marks the resting-place of the local smith, an important man in the life of the township; a chalice commemorates a priest.

CHAPTER XII

PRIESTS AND ARCHDEACONS

Appointments

Lay Patrons.

In 1274 the Council of Lyons decreed that rectors must be at least twenty-five years of age, must reside in the parish and must take priests' orders within a year of appointment. These orders were often disobeyed. Incumbents were appointed by the patron of a living and livings were often bestowed upon the younger sons of county families, who were appointed at the age of fifteen or sixteen. Such youthful rectors could not have taken the necessary vows and Dr. Coulton says [1] that in four dioceses during the forty-five years which preceded the Black Death "scarcely more than one-third of the livings in lay gift were presented to men in priests' orders". Some went to Oxford or Cambridge to study theology, and a vicar or chaplain served the parish instead of the absent rector. Many regarded their parishes simply as a means of getting money; they discharged their duties inefficiently and set a very poor example to their parishioners.

In some churches in Wales and Ireland a lay rector, or abbot, was appointed. Giraldus Cam-

[1] *Chaucer and His Times*, 299.

brensis[1] says that the church of Llanbadarn Fawr, near Aberystwith, had a lay abbot and complains that lay abbots "have usurped the whole right, appropriating to their own use the possession of all the lands, leaving to the clergy only the altars, with their tenths and oblations, and assigning even these to their sons and relations in the Church".

Monastic Appropriations.

Many churches were appropriated to monasteries which, as rectors, received the great tithes of corn and hay, and paid a small salary to a resident vicar, who could be dismissed at will, to discharge the duties of the living. The task of repairing the chancel, which devolved upon the rector, was often neglected by corporate and monastic rectors. Parishes suffered seriously from this arrangement, and such "appropriations" were one of the many Church abuses against which Grosseteste protested. Appropriations were checked by the Statute of Mortmain in 1279; they did not entirely cease, but they were more difficult to effect and subject to stringent regulations.

Difference of interest often led to bitter quarrels between monks and secular priests, but we may hope that these differences did not often lead to assault and battery as in the case of the accompanying illustration.[2]

Royal Patronage.

Royal patronage was sometimes given as a reward for services rendered to the King. "Benefices," said Wycliffe, "instead of being bestowed on poor clerks, are heaped upon a kitchen clerk, or one wise in building castles or in worldly

[1] *Itinerary through Wales*, Everyman's Library, 111. [2] Page 312.

business". A servant of Henry III. was said to hold three hundred offices, including nearly twenty benefices; and Archbishop Peckham,

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MONK ASSAULTING SECULAR PRIEST

Southwell Minster

with pardonable warmth, told Edward I. that royal servants held "a damnable multitude of benefices".[1] As many of these rectors con-

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 350.

tinued to serve the King, the system of royal patronage led to an increase in absenteeism and the consequent neglect of parochial duties.

Many rectors held more than one living. One vicar of Ingleby Arncliffe in North Yorkshire held also the living of East Heslerton, some forty miles away ; an Archdeacon of Thessalonica held livings in Norfolk.[1] The system of pluralities led to further neglect of parochial work, and the foundation of chantries in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was partly due to the evils that arose when one priest held several livings. Men desired to secure a resident minister on whom they could rely for the celebration of the Mass, for the visitation of the sick and the absolution of the dying. In many parish churches an unbeneficed stipendiary priest was hired for an annual payment and his services were always available. Such priests were termed *parochiales presbyteri*, and there was thus a marked difference in the Middle Ages between the "parish priests" and the beneficed rectors or vicars.[2] Pluralities.

Innocent III. first claimed for the Papacy the absolute right of disposing of all benefices, and Papal Legates were invested with the power of granting any office or dignity to any ecclesiastic. About 1226, Pope Honorius III. instructed his Legate Pandulf, who had become Bishop of Norwich, to provide a living or livings in Norfolk for the Bishop's brother. Some three years later an Italian clergyman was appointed to the living Papal Provisions.

[1] Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vi. 85.
[2] Dr. A. Hamilton Thompson.

of Kirkleatham in North Yorkshire, the advowson of which belonged to Sir Robert de Thweng of Kilton Castle. The attempt to use English livings for the benefit of foreigners aroused great resentment. Patrons protested against the invasion of their rights of presentation; the English clergy objected to the usurpation of their livings. All men viewed with hatred the strangers whose personal conduct was justly censured, who took the wealth of the country, could not speak English, and whose manners provoked that ridicule which, in all ages, Englishmen have felt for the manners of foreigners.

In 1231, Sir Robert de Thweng, having in vain appealed for justice to the Papal Legate, the Archbishop of York and the Prior of Guisbrough, took matters into his own hand, and showed that he was indeed "juvenis elegans et miles strenuus", as Matthew Paris calls him. Under the assumed name of Will Wither he collected a strong force of retainers and friends and pillaged the property of the Italian clergy who held livings between Trent and Tweed. He cut their corn, threshed it and sold it for what it would fetch, and, when his action was challenged, produced as his warrant what purported to be letters sealed with the King's seal. His strong castle of Kilton afforded a safe base of operations, and he filled it with rich spoils. When the Papal Legate excommunicated him, he appealed to the northern nobles, who readily embraced his cause. They met at Kilton and authorised Sir Robert to go to Rome and protest to the Pope in person against the infringement of the rights of lay patrons.

His mission proved successful. Gregory IX. recognised the justice of his plea and ordered the Papal Legate to respect the rights of lay patrons.[1] But the custom of providing foreign clergymen and of reserving certain benefices for Papal nominees continued to cause great indignation in England until the Statute of Provisors, 1351, asserted for all electing bodies and patrons the right to elect or to present freely to all benefices in their gift.

Chantries founded on permanent endowments alienated to the chaplains, or to trustees on their behalf, were freehold benefices ;[2] the priests of such chantries were appointed by patrons and were quite independent of the rector or vicar of the parish. The system by which two or more independent priests officiated in the same church sometimes led to discord between the vicars and chantry priests.

Income

Tithes. The rector's income consisted mainly of tithes. The Church was entitled to one-tenth of all the produce of the parish. A capitulary of Charlemagne apportioned one-third of the tithe to the clergy, one-third to the poor and one-third to the maintenance of the fabric of the church, but in England the rector was entitled to all tithes. Originally tithes were voluntary gifts, and as late as the fourteenth century Wycliffe declared, " I will not put the title of the clergy to tithes upon any Divine right, although such a

[1] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 338 and iii. 217. *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, xxii. 77.

[2] Dr. A. Hamilton Thompson.

right certainly commenced, and I believe as certainly ceased, with the Jewish theocracy." But they were formally established by Charlemagne in 800 and confirmed by the Lateran Council of 1215. The strongly marked reluctance to pay tithes which was shown by the parishioners of the Middle Ages was due, not to a belief that tithes were not compulsory, but to that innate reluctance to pay any form of taxes which always marks the taxpayer.

The tithes on corn and hay, "the great tithes", were by far the most productive, but wool, farm produce and stock made considerable contributions to the rector's income. The tenth lamb, the tenth foal and the tenth calf were due to the Church, the tithe of milk was paid in the form of cheese.[1]

Tithes were payable on wages, on handwork and on such small items as the down of geese and the grass cut by the roadside. In parishes near the sea the rector claimed his share of fish and of all that was washed ashore. When a shoal of porpoises was cast ashore on the coast of Yorkshire in 1377 the rector of Kirkleatham claimed twenty-one.

It is not surprising that such a system led to frequent quarrels between the rector and his parishioners. Although the failure to pay tithes involved grave ecclesiastical censure, many delayed payment, some refused to pay at all. When Sir John Fastolf died in 1463 the Abbot of Langley wrote to his executor, Sir John Paston,

[1] Dr. Coulton, *Mediaeval Studies: Priests and People before the Reformation.*

pointing out that Fastolf owed four years' tithes and an additional five shillings on Abbey property, and added, "This, thus kept from Holy Church . . . may not be without great peril of soul; where the peril is God knoweth. I pray God amend it, and give them grace that have his goods so to dispose them, that they and the dead may both be out of peril, and the Trinity have you in his merciful keeping." [1] The same principle applied to parish churches, and those who failed to pay were liable to excommunication. Archbishop Winchelsea impressed upon his clergy the duty of "cursing for tithes" in the case of defaulters, but the custom of refusing the Holy Sacraments to those who were in arrears was condemned by Church Councils. It is difficult to estimate the precise amount of guilt incurred by some farmers who, having quarrelled with their rector, brought their tithe of milk to church in liquid form and "poured it out before the altar in scorn of God and his Church".[2]

Other Sources of Income.

The income the rector received from tithes was supplemented by mortuaries, a share of the estate of a deceased parishioner, which in England was generally the second best animal of the farmer's stock. The surface of the churchyard, like the chancel, belonged to the rector and he received burial fees whenever a grave was dug. Easter offerings, being voluntary, were often disappointing, and Grosseteste, who disapproved of the practice of receiving Easter offerings at Mass, forbade his clergy to

[1] *Paston Letters*, Everyman's Library, i. 234. [2] Dr. Coulton, *supra*.

exclude from service those who had not paid their offerings.

Stipendiary Priests.

The unbeneficed stipendiary priests, who included chantry priests, received none of the great tithes and in many cases little, if any, of the small tithes. Their salaries were fixed at a minimum of five marks by a Council held at Oxford in 1222; they used the Black Death to get a rise to six and in 1429 the minimum salary was raised to ten. In some cases the religious houses made their vicars swear that they would never ask for a larger stipend and the vicar's stipend was far less than the amount drawn from the parish by his ecclesiastical patrons. In 1291 the vicar of Dymock in Gloucestershire received six marks a year, while the Abbey of Cormeilles in Normandy, to which the parish church belonged, received thirty-nine.[1]

The Use of Manorial Land.

Many of the priests lived in abject poverty and were glad to avail themselves of any opportunities of adding to their income which the township afforded. Like all freemen, they had their strips of ploughland in the common field of the township; they could graze their geese and cattle on the common pasture and had their share of the turf, bracken and rushes which grew on the manor land. A special privilege which vicars valued was the right to wood. One Yorkshire vicar was entitled to take eight loads of timber from the Forest of Galtres, near York; another received a free gift of all the timber he needed to repair his house and his hedges, and

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 417.

this was no small boon at a time when houses were built of wood.

Charges on Income.

Even the rectors of rich parishes found their incomes inadequate. A priest was expected to lend to the needy [1] and, generally, to act as a relieving officer. The rectory was usually large and the rector was expected to give hospitality in his house, lest travellers should sleep in the church. It was his duty to entertain his superiors and their attendants on the occasion of their official visits and the cost was very heavy. A theological work of the early fourteenth century [2] shows that such visits were indeed visitations. "What can the wretched rector do? For the Rural Dean visiteth him with two horses . . . and the Archdeacon with five or seven, the Bishop with twenty or thirty, and the Archbishop with forty or fifty." Twice a year the rector had to travel to Diocesan Synods and pay fees.

The rector's income was liable to be depleted at any time by heavy demands from King or Pope. In 1294, Edward I. demanded from the clergy half their annual income. Papal Legates levied great sums which were sent to the treasury at Rome, and Matthew Paris declared that Papal exactions were "an intolerable burden". The task of collecting these payments was difficult; the Legates were generally received with "threats, contempt and personal violence" . . . and were sometimes "stoned for their good work".[3] Cardinal Otho, a Papal Legate who came to

[1] Langlois, i. 151. [2] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 193.
[3] Quoted by Milman, viii. 151.

England in 1236, to avoid the danger of poison appointed his own brother as his chief cook. On April 23, 1238, a number of students forced their way into Oseney Abbey, near Oxford, where the Cardinal was staying. A poor Irish clerk went to the kitchen to beg for food and the cook threw a pot of scalding broth into his face. A Welsh student shot the cook dead with an arrow. A fierce struggle ensued. Otho took refuge in the tower, where he was besieged by the infuriated students. He was rescued by some royal soldiers whom the King sent to his help.[1]

Archbishops made heavy demands and in 1246 the Pope authorised the Archbishop of Canterbury to take the first year's revenue of all the benefices in his diocese to pay off the debts of the see. We readily believe that "all the prelates and clergy of England were so amazed and confounded that words cannot express it".[2]

The Duties of the Priest

The priest's first duty was to conduct services in his church. He celebrated Mass daily and certain rules for his personal conduct are laid down in *The Parish Priest*.[3] He must not use his surplice as a handkerchief, and if a gnat, fly or spider falls into the cup he must swallow it. If he is hearing a woman's confession he must not spit or cough.

Careful instructions were issued on the subject

[1] *Political History of England*, 1216–1377, Tout 58.
[2] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., iii. 4.
[3] E.E.T.S. 27, 59.

of preaching. Sermons should tell the story of Christ simply and straightforwardly ;[1] Archbishop Peckham ordered parish priests to give their parishioners simple instruction in the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the seven Deadly Sins and the seven Sacraments, and sent specimens of preaching for their guidance.

Very few chantry or parish priests were well educated ; " untrained priests lead their flock into sin through their own ignorance ".[2] Grosseteste was compelled to refuse ordination to candidates because they were young, ignorant, and in some cases almost illiterate. Many had received no education, except that which a chantry school afforded, few had an adequate knowledge of Latin in which the service was conducted, fewer still had gone to Oxford or Cambridge, although visitors reported in the reign of Edward VI. that three chapel priests at Osmotherley in Yorkshire were " of good learning . . . one being a scoler at Oxford ". Sermons, therefore, were not always acceptable. The people of Calbrook, in 1301, said that their rector preached " well enough " and that he expounded the Gospels to them " as far as he knew . . . but he did not teach them much ".[3] The same criticism is often heard to-day and ever will be ; but the fault sometimes lies not in the pulpit but in the pew. At the end of the sermon the priest frequently read official reports of battles fought, of the acts of the king or other important events.

[1] E.E.T.S. xlix. 26. [2] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S.
[3] *Before the Great Pillage*, Jessop, 116.

Music. The rector was responsible for the musical part of the service. We learn from Bede that in the seventh century an attempt was made to improve church-singing. Augustine and his successors had taught sacred music to the men of Kent, and from Kent the Roman style of singing was introduced into other parts of the country. About 669 "they began in all the churches of England to learn sacred music, which till then had been known only in Kent".[1] Wilfred, Bishop of Hexham, brought into his diocese Putta, "who was extraordinarily skilful in the Roman style of music, which he had learned from the disciples of the holy Pope Gregory". Wilfred's successor Acca, himself a most expert singer, brought Maban from Kent to teach him and his clergy new hymns and to revise old ones.[2] About 680 John, "the archanter" of St. Peter's, came and taught the Britons "the method of singing throughout the year as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome". Bede himself shared in the good work and applied himself "to the daily care of singing in the church".[3] The Council of Clovesho ordered priests to keep to the order of service and to sing simply with proper pronunciation.

Confession. The priest generally conducted baptisms at Easter and Whitsuntide, and every parishioner was required to go to Confession at least once a year. The duty of hearing confessions devolved upon the parish priest, and he was required to hear the confessions not only of his own parishioners but of any wandering scholars, of

[1] *Bede*, Everyman's Library, 164. [2] *Ibid.* 263. [3] *Ibid.* 283.

soldiers going to battle, or of travellers at the point of death who happened to be in the parish.[1] Men who had been guilty of immorality with the priest's mother, sister or concubine were forbidden to make their confession to him.[2]

But people were reluctant to make confession to their own priest, and the friars heard many confessions. The priests strongly resented this interference with their rights, and it was one of the causes of the great hostility that the secular clergy always showed to the friars.

Other Duties.

The parish priest conducted funerals and "obits", or memorial services for the dead, although the latter were often performed by chantry priests in the chapel or at the altar which the deceased had endowed. He arranged Scotales and processions.

As the only man in the parish who had any education the priest was often called upon to make wills, to act as a trustee or executor. This custom apparently became more common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the members of county families were often succeeded by men of humbler birth who could better understand the needs of their parishioners.

Military Service.

Parish priests, as landholders, took their share in the defence of the country and were compelled to furnish men-at-arms and archers in time of need. The Archdeaconry of Cleveland contributed ten men-at-arms and eighteen archers to the king's armies which marched against the Scots. When necessary the clergy often proved themselves first-class fighting men. At the

[1] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S., 26. [2] *Ibid.*

Battle of Neville's Cross in 1346 many priests were seen carrying swords and six-foot bows; they went barefoot and chanted psalms as they marched. But some carried only oaken staves with which they dealt mighty blows and "gave short shrift", and one grey-headed subdeacon shed so much blood that he was no longer qualified to say mass.[1] If any had criticised the action of these valiant clergy they might have pleaded that they only followed the example of Archbishop Zouche, who bore him right doughtily in the battle.

Schools. Chantry priests often acted as schoolmasters; chantry schools played an important part in local education, and a number of modern grammar schools were originally founded as chantry schools.

The Marriage of the Clergy[2]

Although the marriage of the clergy was absolutely forbidden by the Catholic Church, the custom was widespread. By a degree of Charlemagne[3] early Frankish priests were ordered not to have more than one wife; in the early part of the eleventh century hardly an unmarried priest could be found in Normandy and the same was true of Germany, England and Lombardy.

Gregory VII. Pope Gregory VII. (1073–85) determined to stop the marriage of the clergy, which his predecessors had failed to do. In a Synod held in Rome in 1074 he deprived married priests of their

[1] *A Mediaeval Garner*, 529.
[2] See *History of Latin Christianity*, iv. 16-26.
[3] *Life of Charlemagne*, 44.

office and forbade laymen to hear them say Mass. He ordered archbishops to enforce strict celibacy on their clergy. The German clergy protested that Gregory was plainly a heretic forgetting that Our Lord had said that some could not keep the law of abstinence;[1] that he was trying to compel men to live like angels and thus promoting immorality; and that, if he tried to give effect to his opinion, they would rather renounce their priesthood than their wives.[2] At a Synod held at Erfurt some of the German clergy were so incensed at the attempt of the Archbishop of Maintz to carry out Gregory's instructions that they left the Synod, and even proposed to drag the archbishop out of the cathedral and put him to death. The German clergy expressed the general feeling of their order. The attempt to enforce the decree led to great distress. The married clergy regarded themselves as married in the sight of God, and some of their wives committed suicide when their husbands renounced them in consequence of the decree. But if Gregory succeeded in checking the marriage of the clergy he did not stop immorality, and the private life of the parish priest sometimes set a bad example to his flock.

England.

Henry I. used the opportunity to fill his treasury. In spite of the opposition of the bishops he allowed priests to retain their concubines on payment of money[3] and exacted such heavy fines from married priests that two hundred

[1] St. Matthew, xix. 11, 12.
[2] *Lamberti Annales*, Pertz, ii. 163.
[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., i. 243.

went to him wearing their vestments and barefooted to beg for mercy. A Church Council held in London in 1129 ordered priests to put away their wives, but "their ordinances amounted to nothing. All held their wives by the king's leave as they did before." [1] The marriage of parish priests was almost universal in the reign of Henry II.[2] In the next century Grosseteste [3] in vain protested against priests who kept concubines in their houses. A council of 1250 ordered that no rector should succeed his father,[4] but the marriage of the clergy tended to establish a hereditary priesthood. In Wales the sons of priests, "after the decease of their fathers, succeed to the ecclesiastical benefices, not by election, but by hereditary right, possessing and polluting the sanctuary of God".[5] An unmarried priest was the exception in the North of England, and a clerical family held the office of priest of Hexham Church from father to son for several generations.[6]

The service books of the Church were sometimes used for the benefit of the priest's household. Giraldus Cambrensis says that a priest should not leave service books to his children unless the Church possessed a duplicate set; in this case the Church must retain the better set. Complaints were made that priests' concubines bartered the church books to get fine dresses.[7]

[1] *A.S. Chronicle*, 203.
[2] Hallam, *Middle Ages*, 300.
[3] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 154.
[4] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 90.
[5] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Description of Wales*, Everyman, 195.
[6] *The Priory of Hexham*, Surtees, v. 1, 71.
[7] *Chaucer and his Times*, 100.

Germany and France.

Conditions on the Continent were similar to those in England. Bishop Adalbert of Hamburg urged his clergy "to keep yourselves free from the pestilent chains of women, but if you cannot be compelled to do this, which only perfect men can do, at any rate observe modesty in the bond of matrimony according to the saying, 'Si non caste, sed caute'". In 1274 the Council of Lyons condemned "bigames", who had married widows or prostitutes. The Abbé Gilles[1] protests against the conduct of parish priests, who kept women as their domestic servants. Étienne de Fougères, Bishop of Rennes, laments that the life of the parish clergy is too often inconsistent with their preaching, but bids laymen honour them all the same, "if not for themselves yet for their Saviour". He censures curés for using the payments they receive for Masses to keep their children, and for spending the income of the Church upon their mistresses.[2] Mathew, an ex-priest, had evidently made a bad bargain. He laments that he "had married a widow who nags him continually and calls him a scoundrel"; she is "a wicked beast in truth".[3]

Faults of Parish Priests

The reports of bishops, the proceedings of church councils and the comments of chroniclers show that the conduct of parish priests was not always satisfactory.

Complaints of immorality and drunkenness were painfully common.

[1] Langlois, i. 353 [2] *Ibid.* i. 9. [3] *Ibid.* i. 242.

Neglect of Services.

Complaints were made that services were carelessly conducted. Archbishop Peckham in 1281 denounced the "damnable negligence of the clergy", and particularly the slovenly way in which they celebrated the Mass. Grosseteste[1] asserted that some priests did not say the canonical hours at all, and that those who said them displayed no devotion. "From the neglect of rectors and carelessness of pastors evils so manifold, so serious, so shameful, wicked and criminal have become inherent in a people redeemed by the blood of Christ."[2] L'Abbé Gilles[3] complains of mercenary priests who were of disorderly life and ignorant of the Scriptures; "the faithful would rather be thrashed than confess to them". Formerly they said one Mass a day; "now they say three or four to get money and then go to drink in a tavern". According to the Emperor Frederick II., whom we cannot regard as an unprejudiced critic, "Italian priests seek to ensnare, to grasp money, to subjugate all men: they appear as lambs, but are in reality ravening wolves".[4]

Games.

Many parish priests were unduly fond of secular entertainments or games. Grosseteste[5] censures them for joining in May-day celebrations. They were forbidden to play at quintain or dice, to attend plays or to take part in wrestling or shooting matches.[6] We read of one sporting parson in Buckinghamshire who was so fond of football that on Sunday he held all his

[1] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 317. [2] *Ibid.* xxiv. [3] Langlois, i. 351.
[4] *Mediaeval Italy*, 276. [5] Page 317.
[6] *The Parish Priest*, E.E.T.S.

services in the morning, including "Compline", which was so called because it completed the day. He thus left the afternoon free for football.[1]

Trading.

The parish priest held glebe land and, with the rest of the villagers, had his share in the common field. Every country clergyman was also a farmer. But general trade was forbidden, and as early as the Council of Clovesho in 747 the clergy had been required to abstain from secular employment. But many clergy in all countries tried to supplement their incomes by trade. "Curés to-day", said L'Abbé Gilles,[2] "are obliged for a living to work at something other than God's service." An investigation held in Normandy in 1248 showed that one parish priest was "ill famed of trading and keepeth farms to which he goeth ofttimes so that divine service is diminished in his church"; others sold rams, bought and sold horses, traded in cider, corn and salt, and one "hath ships on the sea".[3] In spite of repeated papal prohibitions clerical trade persisted in Germany, and at a council held in 1333 at Cologne the clergy received permission to sell wine from their own benefice, provided they sold it honestly "without vociferation or clamour of taverners and without fraud", and provided the buyers took it away for consumption. "Off" licences are obviously not a modern invention.

Fine Raiment.

The clergy sometimes wore clothes that were too fine for their calling. *The Parish Priest* not

[1] *Mediaeval England*, 424. [2] Langlois, i. 351.
[3] Dr. Coulton, *Middle Ages*, 79.

only warns the clergy to avoid evil living, oaths, drunkenness and the frequenting of taverns, but also forbids them to wear armour, or well-cut clothes and pointed shoes.[1] A council held at Rouen commanded all clergymen to wear cassocks, and ordered that tabards or jackets worn by the clergy should be taken away and given to leper houses.

Hunting.

Complaints were made that some priests were too fond of hunting, and some of them were so devoted to the chase that they brought their hawks and hounds with them into church. Some who lived near forests made a full use of their opportunities. Robert Hampton, Rector of Middleton, was a confirmed poacher and took much game in the Forest of Pickering. He kept four greyhounds, carried bows and arrows in spite of the law, "oft hunted hares at will and was concerned in the theft of two cartloads of beans". In spite of repeated warnings he persisted in his evil deeds and was outlawed in 1328.[2] He offended in good company, for the Dean of York was fined £20 in 1331 for taking venison in the Forest of Galtres.

The other side.

It is only too clear that the lives of some parish priests were sadly inconsistent with the vows they had taken at their ordination, and that their conduct too often set a bad example to laymen. But the warning given in the case of the monastic clergy[3] must be repeated with regard to parish priests. Their evil deeds provoked the censure of the pious, pro-

[1] "Cutted clothes and pyked schone."

[2] *North Riding Records*, New Series, ii. 70 and 186. [3] Page 270.

vided material for the satirists and enlivened the dull pages of the chroniclers. If their good deeds had been as carefully recorded as their faults we should find that many parishes were faithfully served by humble and holy men of God, who not only "allured to brighter worlds", but, by their own example, "led the way".

Archdeacons

An archdeacon was a bishop's curate and was charged with the duty of conducting parochial visitations and of generally controlling the finances of the diocese.

During their visitations archdeacons inquired into the condition of the fabric and equipment of the church, and issued orders when necessary for the repair of the building, the vestments and the organ. Sometimes they were instructed to check special offences. Grosseteste [1] ordered his archdeacons to prevent Scotales from being held in church, and to stop games and contests for prizes, "for such games are invented by demons and give occasion for wrath, hatred, blows and murder".[2] In a church synod held in 1222 archdeacons were ordered to see that priests pronounced clearly the words of consecration and baptism. They made inquiry into the moral character of the priest and his parishioners and punished sinners by fines or public flogging in the market-place. Certain tenants in Annandale had been so heavily fined by the archdeacon for adultery that they had no money to

[1] *Grosseteste*, R.S., 73. [2] *Ibid.* 296.

pay the dues they owed to the lord of the manor. The latter then threatened to evict them, and the fear of eviction led to an immediate improvement in morals and the consequent diminution of the profits of the archdeacon's court.

Abuses. The system led to grave abuses. In some parishes men acted as "summoners" or spies[1] and secretly reported to the archdeacon the faults of their neighbours. Both in England and France bitter complaints were made of archdeacons who accepted bribes, particularly from priests who kept concubines. "Archdeacons and deans, worse than pagans, wink, for money, at the concubinage of priests. Provided that she pays, the erring woman becomes, in their opinion, better than a saint." The dean orders the priest to drive her out, saying, "'This cannot be endured'; but (the curé) offers him a good meal, slips five sous into his hand and he is satisfied".[2]

Archdeacons sometimes used their positions to impose unlawful taxes upon priests. One writer denounced them as leeches, who sucked their victim's life blood. But the victims sometimes retaliated. The Archdeacon of Norwich was violently attacked by a body of armed men between St. Albans and London. At the Pope's bidding the king made an inquiry into the outrage, but "the transgressors were found so numerous and so powerful that the king thought it prudent to hush the matter up rather than disturb the peace of the realm by punishing them rashly".[3]

[1] See Chaucer's *Friar's Tale*.

[2] Langlois, i. 10.

[3] *Matthew Paris*, R.S., ii. 338.

Unpopularity of Archdeacons.

The exercise of archidiaconal functions brought archdeacons into general disfavour, and few classes of men were more unpopular in the Middle Ages. University professors occasionally required their students to write essays or hold discussions on the subject —"Can an Archdeacon be saved?" We hope that this was merely an academic exercise and not the expression of real doubt. But we fear the worst.

INDEX

Abelard, Peter, 78.
Absence from Church, 297.
Adam's Peak, 7.
Ælred, Abbot of Rievaulx, 246, 271.
Aeneas Sylvius, 139.
Agnes of Meran, 86.
Albornoz, Cardinal, 81.
Alcuin, 15.
Angel Choir, The, xvi.
Angels, 108, 109, 111.
Anketil, Brother, 250.
Anschar, 51.
Antichrist, 65.
Archbishops—
  Adoldagus (Hamburg), 197.
  Alphege (Canterbury), see Saints.
  Baldwin (Canterbury), 93.
  Becket, Thomas (Canterbury), see Saints.
  Bérenger (Narbonne), 78.
  Courtenay (Canterbury), 78.
  Egelnothus (Canterbury), 196.
  Giffard (York), 268.
  Lanfranc (Canterbury), 59, 150.
  Langton (Canterbury), 82, 86.
  Malger, 136.
  Peckham (Canterbury), 312, 321.
  Rainald (Cologne), 197.
  Reynolds (Canterbury), 296.
  Rimbert (Bremen), 178.
  Scrope (York), 36, 64.
  William (Tyre), 36.
  William (York), see Saints.
  Winchelsey (Canterbury), 317,
Archdeacons, 319, 330-32.
Architecture, Anglo-Saxon, 274.
—— Decorated, 275.
—— Early English, 275.
—— Norman, 274.
—— Perpendicular, 275.
Arculf, Bishop, 12, 200, 202.
Arnold of Brescia, 137, 146.
Aumale, Earls of, 240, 257.
Austin, or Augustinian Canons, 226, 231, 244.

Bacon, Roger, 136.
Baliol, Bernard de, 241.
Ball, John, 74.
Battles—
  Agincourt (1415), 150, 182, 218.
  Aix (102 B.C.), 29.
  Alnwick (1174), 40.
  Civitella (1053), 81.
  Clavigo (939), 181.
  Dorylaeum (1097), 182.
  Flodden (1513), 249.
  Fornovo (1494), 195.
  Garigliano (916), 181.
  Hastings (1066), 39.
  Ludford (1459), 39.
  Neville's Cross (1346), 183, 324.
  Standard (1138), 182, 246.
  Winwoodfield (655), 39.
  Zulpich (496), 38.
Beatific Vision of God, 110.
Bede, 35, 106, 125, 134, 273.
Bega, 166.
Benedictines, 225, 236, 246.
Benjamin of Tudela, 12.
Berter of Orleans, 73.
Berthold of Ratisbon, 58, 64, 70.
Bertrada of Montfort, 85.
Berzé, Seigneur de, 34.
Bishops—
  Acca (Hexham), 322.
  Adalbert (Hamburg), 327.
  Bury, Richard de (Durham), 246.
  Eutherius (Orleans), 103.
  Fougières (Rennes), 327.
  Fulbert (Chartres), 48.
  Gardiner (Winchester), 64.
  Grosseteste (Lincoln), 55, 108, 167, 293, 295, 311, 317, 321, 326, 328, 331.

Bishops (*continued*)—
Hubert (Liège), see Saints.
Hugh (Lincoln), see Saints.
Puiset (Durham), 188.
Wilfred (Ripon), see Saints.
Black Death, 35, 263, 310, 318.
Bondinière, Gabriel de la, 192.
Brocquière, Bertradon de la, 206.
Brus, Adam de, I., 241.
—— Adam de, II., 252.
—— Peter de, II., 241.
—— Peter de, III., 254.
—— Robert de, 238.
Brutus, 98.
Burial feasts, 303.
Burton, Thomas, Abbot of Meaux, 257.
Bussolari, Jacopo de, 74.

Caedmon, 231.
Camaldolites, 224.
Canonisation, 145-50.
Canossa, Castle of, 82.
Carthusians, 224, 232, 244.
Cassius, 98.
Cecilia, Abbess of Caen, 39.
Cerberus, 98.
Chambord, Château of, 133.
Chancel, 279-82, 317.
Chantries, 282, 286, 313, 315.
Chapters, Monastic, 266.
Charles Martel, 103.
Charter of Charity, 225, 236.
Christ, 10, 15, 19, 24, 25, 27, 40-46, 63, 66, 90, 97, 105, 202.
Churches—
Bedale, 288.
Cirencester, 291.
Coventry, 276, 285.
Earl's Barton, 274.
Greenstead, 273.
Ingleby Arncliffe, 278, 313.
Kirkdale, 275.
Kirkleatham, 252, 314.
Llanbadarn, 311.
Ludlow, 276.
Pickering, 285, 287, 288.
Churches (*continued*)—
Sandwich, 292.
St. Mary, Redcliffe, 276, 278.
Cistercians, 109, 224, 231, 236, 237, 244, 247, 260, 267.
Classical authors in Whitby library, 245.
Clovis, 38.
Cluniac Movement, 224.
Colonnas, 81.
Commines, 62.
Compline, 244, 269, 329.
Compostella, 23, 63, 216, 219.
Conan, Earl of Richmond, 237.
Concordia Regularis, 224.
Confession, 60, 322.
Conversi, 247.
Councils (or Synods)—
Basle (1431–43), 137.
Clovesho (747), 322, 329.
Erfurt (1074), 325.
Lateran (1215), 225, 316.
London (1129), 326.
—— (1341), 293.
—— (1342), 270.
Lyons (1274), 311, 327.
Sens (1140), 78.
Vienne (1112), 79.
York (1367), 293.
Crown of Thorns, 46, 195.
Crucifixion, 16, 19, 20, 31.
Crusade, First, 72.
—— Second, 73.
—— Third, 73.
—— Fourth, 197.
—— Frederick II.'s, 80.

Danegeld, 242.
Dante, 98.
Day of Wrath or Judgment, 42, 65, 66, 107, 110.
De Consolatione Philosophiae, 245.
Deus Vult, 72.
Devil, The, 59, 113-43, 178.
Devil's Arrows, 130.
Devil's Door, 141, 277.

Devil's Parliament, 41.
Digne, Hugh de la, 75.
Dismas, the penitent thief, 31, 202
Domine, quo vadis? 24.
Dominic of the Cuirass, 61.
Dominicans, 71, 84.
Donation of Constantine, 1.
Dringhow, William of, Abbot of Meaux, 256, 257, 264.
Duns Scotus, 51.

Easter Offerings, 317.
—— Sepulchre, 282, 283.
Eccelin de Romano, 138.
Eginhard, 197.
Eleven Pains of Hell, The, 103.
Emperors, Holy Roman—
Charlemagne, 15, 63, 125, 181, 195, 315, 324.
Charles the Bald, 131.
—— V., 218.
Conrad, 73.
Frederick I. (Barbarossa), 197.
—— II., 80, 81, 328.
Henry IV., 51, 76, 79, 81, 82.
—— V., 76, 79.
Lewis the Pious, 131.
Otto I., 138, 140, 196.
Otto IV., 61.
Sigismund, 218.
Emperors, Greek—
Baldwin II., 195.
Basil, 43.
Manuel, 218.
Michael, 43.
Emperors, Roman—
Caligula, 16.
Constantine, 1, 196, 202.
Decius, 168, 169, 177.
Diocletian, 168, 175.
Domitian, 24.
Hadrian, 175.
Julian the Apostate, 51.
Nero, 20, 24, 167, 168.
Nerva, 24.
Tiberius, 16, 19.
Titus, 19.
Emperors, Roman (*continued*)—
Trajan, 98.
Valentinian, 205.
Vespasian, 19.
Erasmus, 214.
l'Espec, Walter, 235, 238.
Etna, Mount, 92.
Eudoxia, Empress, 205.
Euphrates, 88, 89.
Euphrosine of Luxemburg, 131.
Eustace of Vlaie, Abbot, 71, 75, 134.
Excitator, 244.
Excommunication, 76-83.

Fairs, 291.
Farne Islands, 133, 139.
Fastolf, Sir John, 316.
Fitz-Peter, Geoffrey, 138.
Fitz-Walter, Hubert, 138.
Five Joys of the Virgin, The, 46.
Flagellants, 61.
Foramina, 211, 212.
Forest of Galtres, 318, 330.
—— of Pickering, 330.
—— of Whitby, 240.
Fortunate Isles, 88.
Francalmoin, 249.
Franciscans, 52, 58, 109, 168.
Fulk the Black, of Anjou, 44.
—— the Good, of Anjou, 62, 198.
—— Rechin, of Anjou, 85.

Games in Churchyards, 293.
Gargouille, The, 186.
Gaston Phoebus of Foix, 136.
Gerard of Modena, 119.
Gibbon, 61, 168.
Gilbertines, 233.
Gilles Abbé, 35.
Giraldus Cambrensis, 74, 126, 186, 294, 310, 326.
Gisela, sister of Charlemagne, 15.
Glanville, Ranulf de, 40.
God, 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 19, 33-40, 90, 110.
Godfrey de Bouillon, 46.

Goodman of Paris, 47, 55, 57, 295.
Grande Chartreuse, 224.
Granges, monastic, 247, 262.
Guelders, Duke of, 48.
Guild Chapels, 291.
Gyson (Nile), 88, 89.

HALLAM, 52, 71.
Hampton, Robert, 330.
Handyling Synne, 297.
Harding, Stephen, 225.
Harrowing of Hell, 42, 95, 98.
Hawks in church, 295.
Heaven, 87, 107-11,
Hell, 87, 91-105, 107.
Hell's Cauldron, 95.
Herod, 16, 36, 289.
Herse, 301, 304.
Higden, 7, 8, 15, 20, 35, 88, 129, 149, 269, 276.
Hogbacks, 304, 309.
Holy Blood, Bruges, 207, 212.
—— —— Hayles, 209.
—— Hilda, see St. Hilda.
—— Rood, Boxley, 209, 220.
" Hooded Men ", 58.
Horned head-dresses, 35.
Hospitallers of St. John, 151.
Host, the, 298.
" Houseling Folk ", 273.
Hughes de St. Cher, Cardinal, 83.
Huss, John, 74.
Hymns to the Virgin, 56.

IMP, ELY, 114.
—— Lincoln, 114.
Indulgences, 63, 64.
Inferno, 98.
Interdict, Great, 86.
—— 84-6.
Ironworkings, monastic, 248, 253.
Isidore, 23.

JOHN THE GOLDSMITH, 250.
—— of Vicenza, 69.
Joinville, 36, 60, 89, 208, 209, 279.
Joseph of Arimathea, 23, 207.
Josephus, 8.
Jubilee, Papal, 214, 218.
Judas, 98.
Judicial Combat, 254.
Judith of Northumbria, 188.

KILTON CASTLE, 314.
King of Castile—
Ramirez, 181.
King of East Anglia—
Ethelbert, 235.
Kings of England—
Aethelred II., 242.
Athelstan, 235.
Canute, 45, 187, 192.
Edgar, 215.
Edmund, see Saints.
Edward the Confessor, see Saints.
—— the Elder, 154.
—— I., 191, 214, 216, 243, 260, 261, 319.
—— II., 146, 214, 216, 259, 292.
—— III., 52, 216.
—— VI., 321.
Harold, 191, 192, 236, 261.
Henry I., 207, 242, 325.
—— II., 40, 46, 61, 62, 77, 85, 139, 217, 242, 253, 326.
—— III., 146, 207, 216, 261.
—— IV., 36, 64.
—— V., 150, 217.
—— VIII., 218.
John, 81, 83, 86, 138, 190, 235, 260.
Richard I., 84, 129, 138, 139, 181, 217, 260, 263.
—— II., 64, 146.
Sweyn, 187.
William I. (Conqueror), 39, 182, 183, 186, 192, 236, 241.
—— II. (Rufus), 137, 260.
Kings of France—
Charles V., 74.
—— VII., 77.

Kings of France (*continued*)—
Charles VIII., 62, 192.
Louis VII., 73, 217.
—— IX., see Saints.
Philip I., 85.
—— Augustus, 86.
Robert, 192.
King of the Franks—
Pepin, 63.
King of Germany—
Henry the Fowler, 196.
King of Jerusalem—
Baldwin, 207.
King of Leon—
Alfonso, 78.
Kings of Mercia—
Offa, 235.
Penda, 39.
Wulfhere, 239.
King of Naples—
Alfonso, 62.
Kings of Northumbria—
Edwin, 178.
Oswald, see Saints.
Oswy, 38.
King of the Ostrogoths—
Theodoric, 92.
Kings of Provence—
Réné, 185.
Rudolf, 196.
Kings of Scotland—
David I., 231.
Robert Bruce, 259.
William the Lion, 40, 217.
King of Sicily—
Roger II., 192.
King of Wessex—
Edmund, 131.
Knight de la Tour Landry, 44, 60, 104, 120, 132, 134.

LACY, EARL OF LINCOLN, 241.
Ladder of Salvation, 93.
Lancaster, Thomas of, 146.
Langham, Cardinal, 239.
Laniaria, 249.
Lauds, 244.
Lead mines, 248.
Lekynfield, Bursar of Meaux, 264.
Liutprand, 34.
Loches, Castle of, 77.
Lollards, 58, 134, 219.
Longinus, the Centurion, 20.
Low Side Windows, 281, 282.
Lucifer, 113.
Lychwake, 294.

MAGI, 29.
Maillard, Frère, 71.
Maisons Dieu, 221.
Malagigi, 140.
Mandeville, Sir John, 12, 40, 88, 89, 208.
—— Geoffrey de, 37, 77, 187.
Marco Polo, 7, 23.
Marius, 29.
Marriage of the Clergy, 324-27.
Martyrs, 167-78.
Mary, the Virgin, 24, 25, 46-53, 63, 66, 109, 133, 184, 205.
—— sister of Lazarus, 29.
—— Magdalene, 29, 30.
Mass, 57, 58, 71, 84, 87, 107, 120, 132, 141, 217, 247, 276, 282, 292, 296, 313, 320, 325, 327, 328.
Master of Novices, 246.
Matins, 244.
Matthew Paris, 126, 137, 196, 242, 246, 265, 268, 314, 319.
Meaux Chronicle, 105.
Merlin, 126.
Michelangelo, 43.
Milman, Dean, 72.
Milton, John, 112.
Minotaur, 98.
Monastic Houses—
Arden, 264, 268, 270.
Augsburg, 51.
Battle, 236, 241.
Beaulieu, 236, 248.
Boxley, 209, 220.
Bridlington, 185, 266.
Bromholm, 198.

Monastic Houses (*continued*)—
Bury St. Edmunds, 241, 255, 261.
Byland, 231, 241, 242, 243, 249, 253, 259.
Caen, 39.
Calder, 259.
Camaldoli, 224.
Canterbury, 212, 220, 221, 227, 265, 267, 269.
Chichester, 214.
Cîteaux, 225, 236.
Cluny, 224.
Cormeilles, 318.
Coverham, 231, 248, 249, 253, 259.
Croyland, 258, 262.
Dunfermline, 213.
Durham, 188, 199.
Easby, 231.
Eggleston, 231, 260.
Fountains, 228, 237, 248, 262.
Fulda, 227.
Furness, 237, 239, 248, 249, 251, 257.
Glastonbury, 258, 262.
Gorzia, 120.
Grande Chartreuse, 224.
Grosmont, 232.
Guisbrough, 231, 238, 239, 241, 242, 248, 252, 254, 259, 261, 262, 268.
Hayles, 209.
Iona, 227.
Jarrow, 228.
Jervaulx, 231, 237, 248.
Langley, 316.
Lindisfarne, 227.
Malton, 232, 248, 249, 264.
Margam, 251.
Marrick, 268.
Meaux, 240, 241, 248, 250, 251, 254, 255, 256, 257, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 269.
Medhamstead, see Peterborough.
Melrose, 231.
Monastic Houses (*continued*)—
Milton, 235.
Molesme, 225.
Monkwearmouth, 228.
Monte Cassino, 191, 223.
Mount Grace, 232.
Newenham, 263.
Norwich, 255.
Novalitia, 37, 141, 185.
Oseney, 320.
Pershore, 262.
Peterborough, 238, 240, 241, 245, 258.
Pontigny, 199, 253.
Prémontré, 226.
Reading, 243.
Rievaulx, 228, 231, 235, 236, 238, 240, 241, 242, 248, 253, 259.
Romsey, 37.
St. Albans, 235, 242, 245, 246, 250, 258, 265.
St. David's, 213.
St. Gall, 60.
St. Mary's, York, 231, 236, 242, 243, 249, 252, 254.
St. Rhadegund, Cambridge, 239.
Salisbury, 212.
Swine, 251.
Tintern, 228, 248.
Titchfield, 241, 269.
Tours, 15, 37, 222.
Walsingham, 209, 212, 214, 219, 221, 268, 269.
Waverley, 231, 263.
Westminster, 207, 215, 216, 239, 245.
Whalley, 237.
Whitby, 228, 231, 238, 239, 240, 242, 243, 245, 249, 252, 260, 265.
Winchcombe, 228.
Winchester, 207, 215, 216, 239, 245.
Wykeham, 270.
Yeddingham, 258, 270.

Mortification of the Flesh, 164.
Mortmain, Statue of, 311.
Mortuaries, 317.
Mowbray, Roger de, 259.
Murage, 243.
Murdac, Abbot of Fountains, 262.

Natura Bestiarum, 245.
Newburgh, William of, 244.
Nones, 244, 247.
Normandy, Richard of, 126.
—— William of, see William I.

Oak of Geismar, The, 227.
Obits, 244, 323.
Old Testament—
  Aaron's Rod, 202.
  Adam, 2, 5, 6, 57, 98, 201.
  Babel, Tower of, 2, 13.
  Benhadad, 12.
  Creation, 2, 3.
  Dalida, 8.
  David, 12, 201.
  Enoch, 65, 90, 91, 97.
  Elijah, 65, 90, 91, 97.
  Elisha, 198.
  Eve, 2, 5, 6, 57.
  Japheth, 11.
  Jonah, 2, 11, 17.
  Joseph, 11, 12.
  Mamre, Oak of, 15.
  Moses, 12, 201.
  Noah, 7, 8, 9, 89.
  Rahab, 12, 38.
  Samson, 11, 17.
  Seth, 201.
  Solomon, 12, 201.
Orcagna, 43.
Ostia, 34.
Otho, Cardinal, 319.
Otto of Freising, 8, 11, 15, 110.
—— of Bamberg, 37.
Owen the Knight, 91, 105, 108.

Palatine, Henry, Count, 120.
" Palmers ", 210.
Pandulf, Legate, 313.
Paradise, 88-91.
Pardoners, 64.
Parish Coffin, 279, 329.
Parish Priest, The, 60, 320.
Parochiales presbyteri, 313.
Parvise, 277.
Patronage, Church, 311.
Peddar's Way, The, 217.
Penance, 60-64, 86.
Percy, Richard de, 239.
  William de, 228.
Peter of Castelnau, 78, 81.
— the Hermit, 43, 72.
—— of Pontefract, 43.
Philobiblon, 246.
Pilate, 16, 19, 206.
Pilatus, Mount, 19.
Pilgrimages, 215-21.
Pilgrim's Way, 220.
Pison (Ganges), 88.
Plate, Church, 303.
Pluto, 98.
Polychronicon, 246.
Pool of Bethesda, 202, 203.
Popes—
  Alexander II., 192.
  —— III., 243, 253.
  —— VI., 133.
  Benedict VIII., 103.
  —— IX., 137.
  Boniface VIII., 63, 81, 136.
  Calixtus II., 79, 225.
  Clement V., 295.
  Eugenius IV., 137.
  Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), 79, 82, 138, 324-25.
  —— IX., 80, 243, 286, 315.
  Hadrian IV., 85.
  Honorius III., 313.
  Innocent II., 78.
  —— III., 78, 86, 213.
  —— IV., 109.
  John X., 181.
  —— XX., 103.
  —— XXII., 110, 292.
  Leo III., 150.
  —— IX., 80.

Popes (*continued*)—
Paschal II., 79.
Pius II., 139.
Sylvester I., 1.
—— II. (Gerbert), 135.
Urban II., 72, 85.
—— V., 81.
Porches, Church, 277, 288.
Preaching, 69-75.
Precentor, 246.
Premonstratensian Canons, 226, 231, 267.
Priest's Tombstone, 307, 309.
Prime, 244, 266.
Provisors, Statute of, 314, 315.
Purgatory, 87, 105-7.

Quatre Âges de l'Homme, 57.
Quattuor Coronati, 169.
Queens—
Eleanor of Aquitaine (England), 241.
Hadwisa (England), 81.
Ingeburga (France), 86.
Isabella of Angoulême (England), 81.
Teresa (Portugal), 78.

Ralph de Diceto, 206, 209.
Raymond VI. of Toulouse, 78, 81.
Regula Monachorum, 223.
Regular Canons, 226.
Reinfred, 228, 238.
Relics, 190-210, 217.
Religious Guilds, 285.
Reliquary, 193.
Reyner, the Knight, 37.
Rheims, Jackdaw of, 82.
Richard the Painter, 250.
Robert of Molesme, 225.
Roger of Wendover, 246.
Rood Screen, 280.
Ros, Everard de, 235.
Rosamund, Fair, 77.
Rule of St. Augustine, 268.
—— of St. Benedict, 266.
Ryslay, John of, Abbot of Meaux, 256, 257.

Sacred Blood of Bruges, 207, 212.
Saewulf, 12, 29, 200.
Sainte Chapelle, 51, 196.
Saintes Maries de la Mer, 29.
Saints—
Adalbert, 196.
Agape, 175.
Aidan, 154, 159, 227.
Alban, 177, 213, 235.
Alexander, 175.
Alphege, 38, 150, 168.
Ambrose, 33, 222.
Anastasius, 154.
Anatolia, 170.
Andrew, 20, 23, 151, 169, 177, 183, 206.
Anselm, 166.
Ansgarius, 191.
Anthony, 213.
Aquinas, Thomas, 33, 41, 159.
Athanasius, 222.
Augustine, 84, 196, 208, 227, 322.
—— of Hippo, 55, 152, 155, 157, 226.
Barnabas, 175.
Bartholomew, 20, 23, 114, 177.
Basil, 206.
Becket, Thomas, 40, 61, 62, 85, 178, 179, 181, 183, 205, 207, 208, 212, 214, 216, 217, 218, 220, 253, 287.
Benedict, 187, 191, 223, 227, 244.
Bénézet, 184.
Bernard, 73, 113, 137, 163, 184.
Boniface, 227.
Bruno, 224.
Canonica, 212.
Cassianus, 170.
Catherine, 169, 173, 183, 287.
—— of Siena, 41, 159, 167.
Cecilia, 176.
Cedd, 167.
Chad, 163, 167.
Christopher, 147, 153, 205, 287.

Saints (*continued*)—
Chrysostom, 206, 219.
Clement, 170.
Columba, 223, 227.
Cosmas, 176.
Crispian, 152.
Crispin, 150, 152.
Cuthbert, 151, 159, 165, 182, 183, 188-89, 199.
Cyprian, 152.
Damianus, 176.
David, 213.
Demetrius, 182.
Denys, 151, 176.
Dominic, 133.
Douceline, 164, 200.
Dunstan, 119, 131, 133, 141, 178.
Edburga, 163.
Edith, 187.
Edmund, 165, 187, 207, 287.
Edward the Confessor, 154, 165, 196, 213, 214.
Eleutherius, 175.
Elfleda, 154.
Elizabeth, 163, 184, 200.
Emerentiana, 176.
Erasmus, 165.
Etheldreda, 166, 186.
Ethelwold, 224.
Eugenia, 170.
Euphemia, 176.
Felix, 167.
Florentine, 196.
Francis, 297.
George, 39, 151, 177, 182, 185.
Gilbert, 235.
Godehard, 140.
Gregory, 98, 197.
Guthlac, 141, 258.
Helena, 200, 203, 206.
Hilarion, 132.
Hilda, 165, 166, 231.
Hippolyta, 207.
Hubert, 151.
Hugh of Lincoln, 77, 165, 199, 213.
Saints (*continued*)—
Ignatius, 169.
James, 20, 23, 151, 181, 205, 206, 212, 216, 219.
Jerome, 219, 222.
Joan of Arc, 183.
John, 1, 20, 151, 177, 182, 185, 187.
—— the Apostle, 24.
—— the Baptist, 16, 205, 208, 216, 289.
Julian the Harbourer, 152.
Juliana, 141.
Justina, 152.
Justus, 176.
Lawrence, 169, 171, 178, 205, 206, 207.
Louis, 58, 60, 191, 195, 208, 214, 216, 279, 292.
Lucy, 175, 176.
Luke, 206.
Marcellinus, 167.
Marcellus, 169.
Margaret, 134, 183, 213.
Mark, 198, 206.
Martha, 185.
Martin of Tours, 44, 57, 119, 132, 139, 150, 151, 159, 207, 222.
Matthew, 20, 177, 206.
Maximin, 207.
Mercury, 51, 52.
Michael, 97, 139, 183.
Monica, 152, 157.
Nicholas, 90, 154, 159, 161, 181.
Oswald, 159, 190, 212.
Pachomius, 222.
Patrick, 105, 151, 166, 207.
Paul, 20, 24, 169, 177, 178, 181, 205.
Peter, 20, 24, 178, 181, 182, 205.
Philip, 20, 23, 205.
Polycarp, 169.
Prisca, 165.
Quintius, 167.
Remaclus, 207.

Saints (*continued*)—
Remi, 151, 165.
Richard, 214, 218.
Rich Edmund, 133, 154, 163, 164, 181, 186, 199.
Robert, 218.
Romain, 186.
Romuald, 224.
Rosalia, 166.
Saturnius, 169.
Sebastian, 169.
Severin, 152.
Simeon Stylites, 164.
Simon, 20.
Stephen, 166, 205.
Swithin, 154, 163, 220.
Symphorien, 154.
Thaddeus, 20.
Thecla, 170.
Theodore, 182.
Thomas, 20, 23.
Umbilica, 58.
Uncumber, 176.
Valentine, 169.
Valery, 192.
Veronica, 16, 19.
Victor, 175.
Vitalis, 170.
Vitus, 175.
Wilfred, 151, 177, 182, 322.
William, 185, 262.
Wulfstan, 191.
Saints' Days, 150.
St. Paul's Churchyard, 295.
Saladin, 183.
Salimbene, Fra, 36, 37, 209, 297
Sampson, Abbot of Bury, 271.
Savonarola, 70.
Scotales, 296, 323, 331.
Seamless Coat of Christ, 16, 208, 212.
Sext, 244, 247.
Shoe Chapel, 217.
Shrines, 210-15.
Simeon of Durham, 58, 188.
Simon de Montfort, 146.
Sinners Beware, 103.
Sleepwells, 75.
Sorel, Agnes, 77.
Stained-glass Windows, 287.
Summoners, 331.

Tables of the Law, 202.
Taborites, 139.
Tarasque, The, 185.
Templars, 45.
Tetzel, 64.
Thibaut, Count of Blois, 133.
Thief, the penitent, 31, 97, 202.
Thierry, Count of Flanders, 207.
Thurstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, 258.
Thweng, Robert de, 314.
Tigris, 88, 89.
Tithes, 316-17.
Trading, Clerical, 329.
Treasury of Merits, 62.
True Cross or Holy Rood, 200-203.
Tryphonia, Empress, 177.
Tudilo, the monk, 48.

Vernicle, 19, 216.
Vespers, 244.
View of Frankpledge, 242.
Visconti, Bernabo, 81, 83.
— – Matteo, 83.
Visitations, 267, 268, 319.

Walsig, Abbot, 268.
Warwick, Earl of, 39.
Wiche, Sir Richard, 149.
Wickes, Bishop, 267.
William of Malmesbury, 23.
—— the Marshal, 139.
Willibald, 200.
Who go to Hell? 103.
Wycliffe, 58, 311, 315.

THE END

THE EARLY HISTORY
OF
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